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ABSTRACT

This annual report is intended to assist parents and citizens to stay informed on the changes in Kentucky schools. The document also is intended as a reference source for information concerning specific programs or areas of interest in Kentucky schools. Most sections provide information concerning the following: basics of the law; what is new in the current year; what parents and citizens might expect to see as a result of changes; how to become involved; and a list of sources for more information. Specific updates addressed in the guidebook include the following: (1) assessment and school accountability; (2) early childhood programs; (3) primary school; (4) early reading program; (5) extended school services; (6) high schools; (7) exceptional and at-risk students; (8) equal opportunities in education; (9) school-based decision making; (10) family resource-youth services centers; (11) school safety; (12) technology and education; (13) vocational-technical education; (14) professional development; (15) education professional standards board; (16) school finance; (17) governance; (18) alternative school schedules and calendars; (19) parent involvement; and (20) map of community support regions. (SD)

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KENTUCKY SCHOOL UPDATES:

A Parent/Citizen Guide for 1999-2000

The Prichard Committee
for Academic Excellence
and
The Partnership
for Kentucky Schools

PS 027987

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August 1999

INTRODUCTION

Kentucky School Updates: A Parent/Citizen Guide is a publication prepared each year by the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence and the Partnership for Kentucky Schools. It is intended to help parents and citizens stay up-to-date on what's happening in Kentucky schools.

We believe informed and involved parents and citizens are critical to school success. Your interest and support encourage students and educators as they work to improve student achievement. Because schools and the rules about them are ever-changing, it is necessary to provide annual updates.

We suggest that you use this document as a reference for the things you need to know. The Table of Contents will guide you to specific programs or areas of interest. In most sections you will find headings leading you to the basics of the law, what's new this year, what you as a parent or citizen might expect to see this year as a result of those changes, results or what has happened since changes were made, what you can do to get involved, and a list of sources for more information.

We also believe parents and citizens need to stay in touch with elected officials who make decisions about how our schools operate. We'll leave it to you to find your local school board members but we've included information in the section on parents called "Stay in contact with your state legislators." We hope you'll talk with them about the good things that are happening in your schools as well as the problems you observe.

In June 1999 we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Kentucky Supreme Court ruling, the catalyst for the changes in education, and as we approach the tenth anniversary of the passage and signing of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, the Prichard Committee is preparing a report on ten years of progress and steps needed to continue to improve student learning. Contact us for a copy of that report (available November 1999).

Many people contributed to the publication of this book including staff members at the Kentucky Department of Education, the Legislative Research Commission, the Office of Teacher Education and Certification, and the Cabinet for Families and Children. These people provided updated information and reviewed materials for accuracy. We extend our appreciation to those friends. I also wish to thank our staff for its patience and assistance each year.

It is our hope that this guidebook will provide you with information and encouragement to be involved in the education of the children in your community. I invite you to send additional questions or suggestions to me.

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ASSESSMENT AND SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- In Kentucky, **schools are held accountable for student learning** with rewards for success or assistance for failing to meet expectations.

- **High learning standards** have been established for all students. They have been defined in the following documents:

  - **Six student learning goals** were established by the 1990 Kentucky General Assembly and became the basis for student learning. In 1994 the legislature decided that two of the six goals would not be assessed for school accountability.

  - The six goals were further defined by the **Council on School Performance Standards** as 75 learner outcomes. In 1994 the State Board of Education adopted a revised list of **57 Academic Expectations** which were approved by two legislative committees.

  - The **Core Content for Assessment**, first developed in 1994 and revised this year, provides lists of content that have been and will continue to be assessed for accountability. It includes the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and humanities, practical living, and vocational studies. Testing these subjects is required by law. Changes in the Core Content for Assessment must be developed through a public process involving parents and citizens.

  - To further define what students should know, the state board has approved the **Program of Studies**, an outline of the minimum content that should be taught in Kentucky schools. The Program of Studies does not include all the core content so schools need to pay attention to both documents as they make decisions about curriculum.

  - Successful school performance also includes student attendance, retention, drop-out rates, and successful transition to adult life (college, jobs, or the military). These are known as the non-cognitive or **nonacademic indicators** of school success.

- The State Board of Education has responsibility for creating and implementing the state **assessment and school accountability program** to be sure that Kentucky students are mastering these higher standards. The 1998 General Assembly required the board to close out the initial system called the Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS) and develop an improved system called the **Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS)**.

  - The **Kentucky Core Content Tests** have been created to assess whether students are learning the core content. They include:

- ✓ multiple choice questions
- ✓ open-response questions that require an answer that may include a written explanation, graph, pictures, diagrams or charts
- ✓ writing prompts (questions that require, longer, more developed writing responses)

Also included in school accountability is:

- ✓ a norm-referenced, multiple choice test (Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills/5 or CTBS/5)
- ✓ writing portfolios

(See chart page 8 for a full summary of testing.)

- The law also calls for including **performance assessment events** for schools that have students enrolled in performing arts organizations and for establishing a technically sound **longitudinal comparison** of test results for the same students. Both of these indicators have been more difficult to create and are being studied at this time. In the meantime, the performance assessment results will be included in school report cards.

■ **To hold schools accountable**, the Kentucky Board of Education has established a system to compare progress from year to year using school tests and non-cognitive indicators.

- For the **1998-99 and 1999-2000 years an interim accountability system** will be used to provide a transition from the old system to the CATS system. The test has been changed too much between KIRIS (1996-98) and CATS (1998-2000) to make a fair comparison, so schools will be measured against a predicted improvement target. That target will be set once all school scores are available. Basically, schools will be compared to other schools with the same 1996-98 baseline score. To receive rewards schools must also have a drop out rate of lower than 8 percent.

- **Beginning with 2000-01** the **CATS Long-term Accountability Model** will begin. The combined 1998-99 and 1999-2000 test scores will set the baseline. By 2014 every school will be expected to reach a score of 100. Every two years beginning in 2002, schools will receive rewards or assistance depending on their progress.

- **To receive rewards** schools must be in the **MEETING GOAL** category (see chart on next page) and maintain a low rate of drop outs and continually reduce the number of students scoring in the lowest category (novice) in formulas determined by the state board. In addition, as schools improve and reach certain set scores or **recognition points**, they will receive rewards. **Pacesetter schools** (those scoring in the top 5 percent of all schools, scoring above the top recognition point, having an acceptable drop-out rate, having not declined in the past two cycles, and having not received other CATS rewards) will also receive rewards.

- **Rewards** are given to schools for school purposes as determined by the school council or the principal in schools without a council. In the past, rewards were available for and usually used as bonuses for teachers.

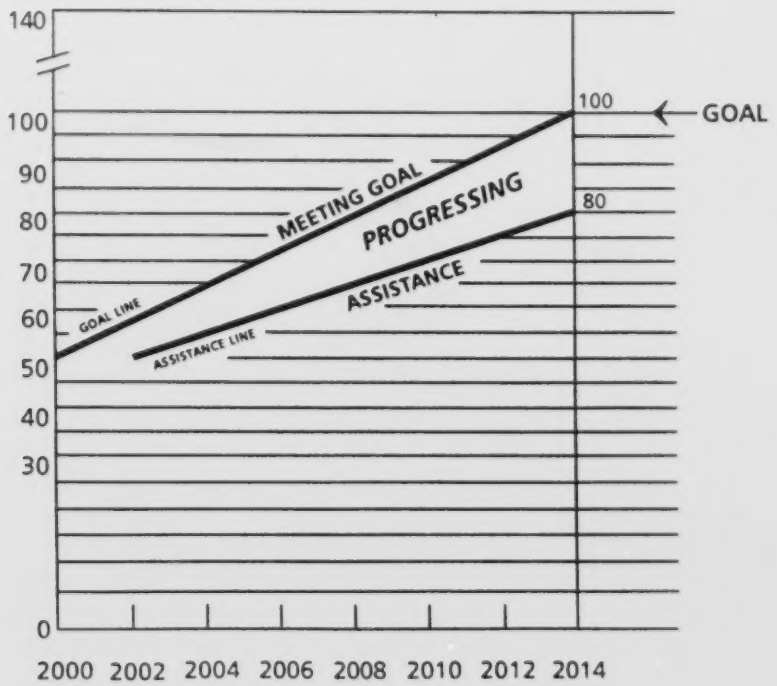
- The **PROGRESSING** category of schools provides a hold harmless factor. As long as schools score 80 or above they will not be placed in the assistance category. There is also a "cushion" or margin of error band at the goal and assistance lines so that schools a few points above or below the line will not be sanctioned.

- Schools that do not meet goals will be in the **ASSISTANCE** category. Depending on how far they fall below their goals, they will be able to apply for **Commonwealth School Improvement** grants, will have the consultation of **highly skilled educators**, and/or be subject to a **school audit** by a team of educators. The audit process will begin in 2000 but will not be fully in place until 2002.

- The law also says improvement plans, evaluation of school personnel, and the option for students to transfer to successful schools may be required of schools in assistance, but final decisions about these items have not been made.

COMMONWEALTH ACCOUNTABILITY TESTING SYSTEM
Long-term Accountability Model

Each school will have a customized chart like this one based on its own baseline scores, and a goal of 100 by year 2014. This example is a hypothetical school with a baseline of 50.



- **Three committees** were established in 1998 to provide final guidance to the state board in developing the new system. They include:

  - ✓ **Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee (EAARS):** an 8-member subcommittee of legislators, appointed by the Legislative Research Commission. Its responsibility is to review administrative regulations and to advise the state board on the assessment and accountability system.

  - ✓ **School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council (SCAAC):** a 17-member group representing educators, local board members, parents, business leaders, and the public, recommended by constituent groups and appointed by the governor. It is charged with studying, reviewing, making recommendations to and advising the State Board of Education and Legislative Research Commission on academic standards, communication with the public, assessment, accountability, and assistance to schools to improve learning.

  - ✓ **National Technical Advisory Panel on Assessment and Accountability (NTAPAA):** appointed by the Legislative Research Commission and composed of no fewer than three testing experts. The current panel includes seven experts. Its charge is to advise the Legislative Research Commission and the state board regarding assessment and accountability.

  - ✓ In addition, the state board must also seek the advice of the **Office of Education Accountability.**

- The law also calls for **student accountability**, but that issue is still under discussion.

- Kentucky **teachers** have a significant role in designing the system. They create the test items, have input on revising core content and the program of studies, and have been given more opportunity to comment on the development of the CATS system. They will also be very involved in reviewing and resetting the standards.

- The Department of Education has established a **validation plan** for the Commonwealth Assessment and Testing System and reports to the legislature every three months.

- The department and state board must assist local districts in developing and using **continuous assessment strategies** that provide diagnostic information for students.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

→ Student work is scored as novice, apprentice, proficient, and distinguished. This year the state board has added scoring levels for reading, mathematics, science, and social studies:

  - ✓ non-performance
  - ✓ medium novice
  - ✓ high novice

- ✓ low apprentice
- ✓ medium apprentice
- ✓ high apprentice
- ✓ proficient
- ✓ distinguished

This allows schools to receive more credit for student progress.

➜ On advice from the National Technical Advisory Panel, the Kentucky Board of Education will have the academic standards reviewed and reset if necessary to be sure that with all the changes made in the last two years, the standards are clear and appropriate. This will be completed sometime in 2000. Hundreds of teachers will be asked to help with this task.

➜ A **school report card** will be prepared for each school beginning this year. The legislature has required schools and school districts to produce an annual school report card that must include student academic achievement, attendance, retention, drop-out rates, student transition to adult life, and school learning environment including measures of parental involvement. Other items will include the school's mission statement and goals; enrollment by grade; reports on state contests such as band, orchestra, chorus, and academic competitions; teacher qualifications; school safety information; spending per pupil; pupil/teacher ratio; and availability of technology. Indications of parent involvement will include the percentage of parents attending parent-teacher conferences, voting in school council elections and serving on committees, and the number of hours parents volunteer. The school can also report on extracurricular activities, awards, and recognitions. The names of school council members will also be listed.

➜ An **Expanded Report Card** will be prepared that will offer more details about student performance data, additional demographic data, and other information that schools want to share.

➜ In addition, each school district must publish a summary of the results for the district in the newspaper with the largest circulation in the county. This will replace the annual school performance report.

➜ The first report cards should be available on or before December 15, 1999.

➜ The law says that the report cards should be sent to the parents of students in the district. The Department of Education is encouraging schools to mail them to parents. The expanded report card will not be sent home but will be available at the school and should be posted at the school's Web site along with the school report card.

➜ The **Core Content for Assessment** has been revised with input from educators and the public. Copies of the Core Content will be available at all schools and on the Department of Education Web site (http://www.kde.state.ky.us) by early September 1999. Core Content Cards are available from the Kentucky Association of School Councils.

RESULTS

- The results of the Kentucky assessments since 1992-93 are as follows:

STATE ACCOUNTABILITY INDEX SCORES BY CONTENT AREA BY YEAR, 1992-93 TO 1997-98

LEVEL	READING	MATH	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES	ARTS & HUMANITIES	PRAC. LVG. VOC. STUDIES	WRITING	NONCOG.	ACCT. INDEX
Elementary									
1993	32.4	22.3	18.2	27.6	8.4	19.2	31.0	96.3	35.7
1994	39.8	34.2	22.4	32.7	9.2	21.7	37.6	96.4	40.9
1995	55.3	41.8	32.4	38.8	11.8	24.0	33.5	96.4	46.2
1996	56.5	38.9	29.8	35.9	11.8	24.3	32.5	96.1	45.0
1997	63.8	44.8	38.1	36.3	13.4	28.0	36.7	96.0	49.0
1998	58.4	44.4	37.2	37.9	15.7	28.9	38.4	95.8	48.8
Middle									
1993	38.4	22.8	19.9	28.9	20.3	16.0	28.1	97.3	37.4
1994	46.8	31.4	20.7	38.0	19.6	19.0	31.4	97.2	41.8
1995	45.5	48.9	24.1	43.0	23.1	17.6	27.6	97.2	44.9
1996	45.5	47.3	18.6	35.9	21.7	12.4	23.9	97.0	41.9
1997	49.2	53.8	23.6	39.0	29.1	18.0	25.9	97.0	45.6
1998	47	51.4	21.7	33	23.5	19.8	28	97	43.9
High									
1993	20.2	22.2	27.1	23.4	14.3	11.8	41.1	93.7	34.9
1994	34.2	30.4	36.8	41.2	23.7	24.9	39.6	94.2	43.3
1995	33.8	45.5	40.9	40.1	17.2	25.3	31.8	94.2	44.9
1996	33.6	44.1	40.9	34.7	16.9	19.8	31.4	93.8	43.4
1997	54.0	50.0	45.3	44.4	17.4	25.4	37.0	94.4	50.4
1998	51.4	47	44.3	49.4	22.2	23.3	43.4	94.4	51.3

Note: Elementary school level includes results for grades 4 and 5, middle school level for grades 7 and 8, and high school level for grades 11 and 12.

Source: Kentucky Department of Education

(Abbreviated items: Prac. Lvg. Voc. Studies = Practical Living/Vocational Studies; Noncog. = Non-cognitive, and Acct. Index = Accountability Index)

- The **National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)** is a standards-based test that provides national comparisons. It has been administered to a sample of Kentucky students in fourth and eighth grade reading and mathematics and eighth grade science. In reading, Kentucky students are above the national average. In mathematics and science Kentucky students are within one to four points of the national average.

- Two studies show that student writing has improved since portfolios have been required. College freshmen were judged to have stayed the same or improved in basic writing skills and improved in understanding the writing process. Fourth grade student writing has improved overall in quality; spelling errors have declined. Knowledge of punctuation and grammar rules have not changed much since 1990.

- Since 1993, more students are being retained at grade levels and more students are dropping out of school. This information has caused schools and the Department of Education to explore causes and solutions, and is the reason the drop-out rate will be a factor in giving school rewards.

- Scores on the Kentucky test have improved significantly since 1992 in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. During the same time, scores on multiple choice tests such as the ACT, SAT, and Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) have not shown the same increases. In addition, scores for the Advanced Placement test given by the College Board have shown increases in the number of students taking the exam and the number of students with passing scores. It is difficult to make comparisons between various tests, because they require different skills of students and are given under different conditions.

- The number of students taking the **American College Test**, or **ACT**, in preparation for college has increased. The number of students taking the recommended core classes for college has grown from 28 percent in 1994 to 43 percent in 1998. The average score (on a scale of 1 - 36) increased in 1998 for the first time in four years from 20.1 to 20.2. The average score in the southeastern states is 20.0; nationally it's 21.0.

- Although school scores have improved on the Kentucky assessments, the average score or index is well below the 100-point goal. In Kentucky, higher standards have been established for students, and the new assessments measure what students know and can do compared to that higher expectation. There is still tremendous improvement to be made.

- National **norm-referenced tests** have been given since 1997 to students in the last year of primary (formerly grade 3) and grades 6 and 9 to provide parents with information to compare their child's scores with similar students around the nation. The reading, language arts and mathematics survey editions of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills/5 (CTBS/5) have been used. The results of these tests were **not** used for school accountability until 1999. On this **norm-referenced** test, a student's results are compared to scores of a group of similar students who took the test in the spring of 1996 who set a national "norm." The score reported to parents tells how their child did compared to the norm. For example a score of 55 means the student did better than 55 percent of the normed group.

- The Board of Education adopted a **Code of Ethics for Appropriate Testing Practices for School and District Personnel** in October, 1997 to give teachers guidelines for what is and is not appropriate in administering the state assessments. Copies of the code can be obtained from each school, the district assessment coordinator, or the superintendent. Copies can also be obtained by calling the Department of Education at (502) 564-4394. Concerns about cheating should be reported to the Department of Education at (502) 564-2983 or to the Office of Education Accountability at (800) 242-0520. You do not have to give your name if you call to report problems. It is, however, more difficult to follow-up on anonymous reports.

SUMMARY OF KENTUCKY'S NEW TEST

COMPONENT	Exiting Primary	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
NORM REFERENCED TEST CTBS in Reading, Math, Language Arts	☆			☆			☆			
WRITING PORTFOLIOS Grade 4 includes 4 pieces • Grades 7 & 12 include 5 pieces		☆			☆					☆
WRITING PROMPT Student chooses 1 of 2 prompts		☆			☆					☆
READING CORE CONTENT 24 Multiple Choice Questions and 6 Open Response Questions		☆			☆			☆		
SCIENCE CORE CONTENT 24 Multiple Choice Questions and 6 Open Response Questions		☆			☆				☆	
MATHEMATICS CORE CONTENT 24 Multiple Choice Questions and 6 Open Response Questions			☆			☆			☆	
SOCIAL STUDIES CORE CONTENT 24 Multiple Choice Questions and 6 Open Response Questions			☆			☆			☆	
ARTS AND HUMANITIES CORE CONTENT 8 Multiple Choice Questions and 2 Open Response Questions			☆			☆			☆	
PRACTICAL LIVING/VOCATIONAL CORE CONTENT 8 Multiple Choice Questions and 2 Open Response Questions			☆			☆		☆		

TWO ADDITIONAL COMPONENTS ARE BEING DEVELOPED BUT ARE NOT CURRENTLY BEING USED:

☆ ARTS PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT will only be for "schools that have students enrolled in performing arts organizations sponsoring sanctioned events with an established protocol for adjudication," like band and choral competitions.

☆ LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON will show progress of the same students over time, using data from other components.

Source: Kentucky Association of School Councils

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Test scores for 1999 will be released in mid-September.

- Tests will be administered each spring as shown on the chart on page 8.

- **Students with disabilities** who meet certain requirements participate in the alternate portfolio program or are given special assistance. For example, a student with an orthopedic handicap who physically cannot write or type but who has the mental capacity to take the test, would have a scribe who could write answers dictated by the student.

- In order to **reduce the time teachers and students spend on writing portfolios** the State Board of Education passed a regulation reducing the number of required items from six to four in grade 4 and five in grades 7 and 12. Portfolios must be a part of the curriculum in all grades to spread the responsibility for writing across the grades. **Classroom portfolios** should be kept throughout each school year with the best pieces selected prior to submission of the final portfolio in the spring of grades 4, 7, and 12.

- Students will continue to get **report cards**. State law does not require state assessment scores to affect students' grades or ability to graduate, but local school boards may adopt policies requiring completion of these assessments for high school graduation. Some teachers may include portfolio or state assessment items in grading their students. Also, some colleges are using portfolios for placement in writing or math classes.

- College entrance officials are showing increased interest in student writing and problem solving. The **Scholastic Aptitude Test**, or **SAT**, is currently undergoing changes that will allow students to demonstrate their problem-solving skills. This will be done through open-ended mathematics questions which require students to calculate their own responses and provide a rationale, just as Kentucky's performance assessments do.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Order a copy** of *The Accountability Book* to learn more about assessment and accountability in Kentucky (available this fall). Call the Prichard Committee for more information (800) 928-2111 or Lexington area (606) 233-9849.

★ **Get a copy** of *Testing in Kentucky Part I: The Assessment* and *Testing in Kentucky Part II: Accountability*, special publications from the Kentucky Department of Education. Copies are being sent to each school for parents. Call the Prichard Committee at (800) 928-2111, or Lexington area (606) 233-9849, if you can't get one.

★ **Ask** your school to hold meetings to explain its assessment scores and discuss what will be happening to improve student achievement.

★ **Ask** to review your **School Consolidation Plan** to see what your school is doing to help all

students improve academic achievement

★ If your child was in grades 3 to 11 last year, assessment results will be available in the fall of 1999. **Make an appointment** with your child's teacher to learn how your child is progressing and where improvement is needed. **Remember**, one test is not sufficient to tell you how your child is doing. Ask to see results of all tests, samples of homework, portfolio items, and classroom work. Ask what strengths and weaknesses your child demonstrates day-to-day in the classroom and what you can do to help.

★ **Talk** with students and teachers about portfolios. You should see whether they are being incorporated throughout the curriculum in all grades and polished just before final submission or whether there is a last minute push to create portfolios just before they are due. Ask students how they will decide what goes into their final portfolios.

★ If your school has a PTA/PTO/PTSA, **request** a program on assessment, curriculum and instruction, or core content to help parents understand what to expect. If you do not have a PTA/PTO, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 564-4378 for help.

★ **Recognize the contributions** of teachers and administrators. Let them know you appreciate the amount of work it takes to adjust instruction and curriculum to help students acquire the writing, reading, computation, and problem-solving skills needed for Kentucky's assessments. Changing classroom practices requires teachers and administrators to think differently about what they do, and it takes time and effort.

★ **Attend** local school board meetings and ask about board plans to improve student performance and provide teacher training.

★ **Write** to your elected officials with specific examples of successes or difficulties with the state assessment program. See page 72 to learn how to contact state legislators.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Community Relations** at (502) 564-3421 (ask for Robin Oatley) or (800) 533-5372 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us
- **The Kentucky Association of School Councils**, (606) 238-2188 for Core Content Cards
- The **Regional Service Center** in your area (see page 56 for a list and phone numbers)

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Kentucky school districts are required to offer developmentally-appropriate **early childhood programs** for 4-year-old children at risk of educational failure and 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities. State funds are used to support this program.

- To participate as a 4-year-old at-risk student, a child must be eligible for the federal free lunch program. Any child 3- or 4-years-old, who has a disability, may participate regardless of family income. Based on local policy, other children may enroll if space is available.

- School districts must work with other preschool programs, like Head Start, to avoid duplication and serve as many 4-year-old children as possible.

- An **Office of Early Childhood Development** has been established in the governor's office. It will focus on the needs of Kentucky's youngest children.

OTHER PROGRAMS

- **Head Start** is a program funded by the federal government that provides comprehensive child development services (preschool education, health services, health, dental and mental health screening and follow up, parent involvement training, and social services) for 3- and 4-year-old children who come from families whose incomes meet federal guidelines for poverty. Children with disabilities may also be eligible. Thirty-three Head Start programs serve children in all 120 counties in Kentucky.

- **Early Head Start** programs begun in 1995 provide services to infants and toddlers as well as expectant mothers. There are six programs in Kentucky serving 12 counties. It is expected that this program will expand to serve more areas of the state in the near future.

- **Evenstart** is another program funded by the federal government through Title I, Part B. It focuses on family literacy services. These programs serve families at risk and children ages birth through seven whose parents are eligible for adult education. The 15 programs in Kentucky offer adult education, parent education and support, time together for parents and children to interact, and early child development. Grants for the program come through the Department of Education where parents can call for more information (502) 564-7056.

- **Parent and Child Education for Family Independence** (PACE for Family Independence) is a preschool and parent education program funded by the state. Children attend a quality preschool program while their parents study basic academics as well as life, parenting, and employability skills. This program is funded through the Department for Adult Education and Literacy and was available in 34 sites across Kentucky last year.

- **First Steps: Kentucky's Early Intervention System** is funded through the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and serves children from birth through age three whose development in communication, movement, learning, social growth, emotional growth, and adaptability is delayed or slower than expected. Parents who believe their child's development is delayed can learn more by calling (800) 442-9987 for the program nearest them.

- **The Childcare Resource and Referral Network** is a group of 14 regional agencies that can help parents find local child care services. For the agency closest to you, contact the Division of Child Care in the Cabinet for Families and Children at (502) 564-2524.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

→ The governor appointed an Early Childhood Task Force that has been studying issues and making long-term recommendations for improving the conditions for young children. These recommendations are likely to be debated and acted on during the 2000 General Assembly.

RESULTS

- All of Kentucky's 176 school districts provide preschool services. Most districts offer preschool programs in conjunction with Head Start and other programs listed above.

- In 1998-99, 79 percent of children eligible for the state early childhood program were served. In 1989-90 (prior to the enactment of the Kentucky Preschool Program) only 29 percent were served by Head Start or other state programs. In 1998-99, 9,876 children ages 3 and 4 with disabilities were served through the state preschool program or Headstart.

- An ongoing research study begun in 1991 by the University of Kentucky on Kentucky's preschool program demonstrates that the program is achieving the goal of reducing the achievement gap between at-risk children and their classmates. The Kentucky Preschool Program produces similar positive outcomes for all groups of children regardless of their race or gender. Findings indicated that the Kentucky Preschool Program has a positive effect on children's development during preschool, their readiness for kindergarten, and their social and academic progress through the fifth grade. Middle school surveys indicate that the children who attended the preschool program continue to do as well and in some cases better than a random group of their peers.

- Nine universities now offer a teacher preparation program in Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education. Expect to see more teachers trained specifically for these preschool and other early childhood programs.

- The University of Louisville has made early childhood development one of its primary areas of focus. Faculty has been added to provide research and training in early childhood.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- ✏ Watch for discussion, debate, and new legislation on early childhood policies during the General Assembly in the winter of 2000.
- ✏ Students identified as at-risk who attend preschool programs should do as well as other children in student performance measures.
- ✏ Any young child with disabilities or whose development is delayed should be eligible for one of the many programs available.
- ✏ Parent involvement should continue to be an important part of these programs.
- ✏ New research on brain development in the first years of a child's life is being widely shared in an effort to encourage more parents to learn how to help their child's development.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ If you have a child attending one of these preschool programs, **join** the parent committee associated with it.
- ★ **Ask** teachers about their observations of students who attended a preschool program as compared to students who did not.
- ★ If you have a child or know of children who might be eligible for these programs, call your **local board of education** office or the offices listed below to see if those children can participate.
- ★ **Visit** preschool, Head Start, Early Head Start, Evenstart, First Steps, or PACE for Family Independence programs in your community.
- ★ If teachers in your program are conducting home visits to their students, **ask** how these visits help prepare children for school.
- ★ If your school has a PTA/PTO, **find out** what it can do to support preschool programs and the families of children who will be entering your primary school. Suggest a mentoring or partnering program for preschool parents or a program that provides preschool children with materials in the summer to prepare them for learning.
- ★ **Invite a speaker to your school or civic club**. Speakers are available to talk about brain research and the importance of quality child care and schooling in infancy and early childhood. Contact the Department of Education's Division of Preschool Programs for information at (502) 564-7056.

★ **Volunteer** to help a teacher in a preschool program. Offer to read to children.

★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members how the programs are working in your district and whether every eligible child is being served. Encourage central office staff members to share the local data they have collected about this program.

★ **Write** or call your elected officials with specific examples of successes and difficulties and to express your wishes for early childhood programs as the debate about policy is conducted. See page 72 for information on how to contact state legislators.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence,** P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- The **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502, (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky Department of Education, Early Childhood Branch/Preschool** at (502) 564-7056 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us
- **The Office of Early Child Development**, Office of the Governor, (502) 564-2611 ext. 457
- **Head Start** Collaboration Office (502) 564-3010
- **Evenstart,** Division of Preschool Services, Kentucky Department of Education (502) 564-7056
- **First Steps,** Cabinet for Health Services (800) 442-0087
- **PACE for Family Independence**, Department for Adult Education and Literacy (502) 564-5114
- **Childcare Resource and Referral Agencies**, Cabinet for Families and Children, Division of Child Care (502) 564-2524

NOTES:

PRIMARY SCHOOL

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Kentucky law requires schools to create **primary school programs** for all students entering school until they are ready for grade four (kindergarten through grade three).

- The law lists the following **critical attributes** in further defining primary school:

  - ✓ **developmentally-appropriate educational practices** or teaching in ways children learn best according to their age and development
  - ✓ **multiage and multiability classrooms** or having children of different ages and abilities working together
  - ✓ **continuous progress** or allowing children to work and progress at their own pace, not having to wait for other children to catch up or be pressured because other children are waiting for them
  - ✓ **authentic assessment**, the ongoing documentation of what students actually learn and do in their day-to-day activities
  - ✓ **qualitative reporting methods** or letting parents know what students know and can do, rather then giving an A, B, C, D, or F in each subject
  - ✓ **professional teamwork** or teachers and other staff members working together to help students learn
  - ✓ **positive parent involvement** or working with and involving parents in positive ways to support student learning

- In a **primary school program**, the curriculum matches the individual student's ability without identifying the student as a first grader, second grader, and so on. The program is intended to help **all** students progress at their own pace. That includes children who are gifted, have learning differences or disabilities, are at risk for educational failure, or who have no identified special learning needs.

- School councils (or the school if no council exists) determine the organization of the ungraded primary program including the extent to which multiage groups are necessary. This organization must be based on the critical attributes and the needs of individual students, including the special needs of first year, half-day (kindergarten) students. Multiage and multiability grouping is required as a critical attribute, but schools have flexibility in how they implement it.

- School districts are required to collect data on the number of students who take five years to complete the primary program and report it in the annual performance report.

RESULTS

- Researchers say that the implementation of the primary program varies widely from school to school and classroom to classroom. That is, some teachers have implemented more of the seven critical attributes, and some have implemented them better than others.

- Researchers also say that primary teachers spend the largest part of the day teaching reading, writing, and mathematics but primary and fourth grade teachers express concern that the basics of spelling, punctuation, grammar, and mathematics computation are being neglected.

WHAT TO EXPECT

✏ Primary program students should be taught the core content for assessment which includes the basics. A copy of the core content should be available in each school.

✏ Each elementary school must implement the primary school program including all of the seven critical attributes. Because there is flexibility in how students are grouped, parents may notice wide variations from classroom to classroom, and school to school. As teachers and school councils work with the primary program and learn more about it, they may make adjustments to improve teaching and learning.

✏ Classrooms look different from the classrooms most adults experienced:

- ✓ tables or desks are moved together, when appropriate, so children can work in small groups
- ✓ children may change groups frequently to meet their own learning needs
- ✓ hands-on material is used to help children learn academic skills and concepts
- ✓ reading areas are arranged where children might sit on the floor or on comfortable furniture
- ✓ students talk together and share things they are learning
- ✓ students are writing more
- ✓ learning centers are created around the basics of science, social studies, and so on
- ✓ children cooperate with each other as they do their work
- ✓ report cards look different and are more detailed
- ✓ children are encouraged to read lots of books; textbooks may be used less.

✏ Some schools are using the **Kentucky Early Learning Profile (KELP)**, a list of skills students should master in the primary program, as a guide and a report for parents. Teachers at other schools have been trained in **Different Ways of Knowing (DWoK)** to help implement the primary program.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ If you have a child in the primary program, arrange to visit the classroom to observe what is happening. **Attend** parent-teacher conferences and ask how your child is progressing, what you can expect, and how you can help.

★ If you have a preschool child, **attend** information sessions about the primary program and make arrangements to visit some time during the school year.

★ Ask your child's teacher what his or her goals are for the year, what you can expect students to learn, and how you can help.

★ If your school has a school-based decision making council, **ask** council members what they are doing to support implementation of the primary program. Volunteer to be a member of the council committee on the primary program.

★ If you have a PTA/PTO, **ask for or plan a program** to help parents understand primary school programs. If you do not have a PTA/PTO, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help at (502) 564-4378.

★ **Encourage** the PTA/PTO, parents, and community to help teachers supply their primary school learning centers and develop materials for these new programs.

★ **Volunteer** to be a teacher's aide or tutor in a primary school classroom.

★ **Recognize** the contributions of teachers and administrators and let them know you appreciate their work in primary school programs.

★ **Communicate with your state legislators** with specific examples of successes or difficulties. (See page 72 for ways to contact legislators.)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org; or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky Department of Education, Early Childhood/Primary School Program** at (502) 564-3064 and visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us
- The **Regional Service Center** in your area (see page 56 for a list and phone numbers)
- You might want to purchase videotapes on the primary school program. Contact the Prichard Committee at (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849).

EARLY READING PROGRAMS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- The **Early Reading Incentive Grant Program** has been established to improve reading instruction for primary students reading at low levels.

- The **Early Reading Steering Committee** has been created to provide oversight for this program. Its 15 members include two primary teachers, eight university professors, and two individuals with a background and interest in reading and literacy. The commissioner of education and the president of the Council on Postsecondary Education or their representatives and a representative from the Advisory Council for Adult Education and Literacy are also members.

- The **Early Reading Incentive Fund** provides grants to schools that are distributed by the Department of Education on recommendation of the steering committee. These state funds ($2.3 million in 1998-99 and $1.8 million in 1999-2000 from lottery proceeds) are to support teachers in the implementation of research-based reading programs.

- School applications for the **Early Reading Incentive Funds** must include the following:

  - ✓ the reading instruction model or program to be used
  - ✓ the method for identifying students who will be served
  - ✓ an implementation plan and timeline including professional development efforts
  - ✓ an evaluation plan
  - ✓ a budget
  - ✓ approval of the application by the school council, the principal, and the superintendent.

- School councils (or the superintendent if there is no council) must commit matching funds in order to receive a grant. (Professional development funds used to support this program may be considered part of the matching funds.)

- The **Kentucky Department of Education** must provide information on successful research-based reading models, strategies for implementing such programs, and a list of professional development providers who offer teacher training in phonics instruction. The department must also present an annual report to the Interim Joint Committee on Education by September 1 of each year.

- A **Collaborative Center for Literacy Development: Early Childhood through Adulthood** has been created to promote reading skills. It is a partnership between the eight state universities, the National Center for Family Literacy, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Department of Adult Education and Literacy, and other agencies that

contribute to learning to read. Its charge is to develop a clearing house for information about literacy models, collaborate with colleges and universities in literacy training for student teachers and for professional development, help districts with students who have poor reading skills assess and identify needs, provide professional development and coaching for teachers using selected literacy models, develop and implement research and evaluation of these models, and establish a demonstration and training site for early literacy at each public university. The Collaborative Center for Literacy Development is located at the University of Kentucky.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

- Sixty local reading projects have been funded in 83 schools at an average cost of $48,025 per school. These funds will pay for teacher training, materials, and additional staff as needed. It is estimated that 471 elementary schools need these programs based on low achievement scores, high poverty rates, sizeable minority populations and the number of limited-English speaking students.

- The Department of Education has applied for $7.5 million for the years 1999-2002 from the federal **Reading Excellence Act**. If Kentucky receives this grant, these funds will be awarded to school districts with especially high levels of poverty or schools in Title I school improvement status. These competitive grants will be used for professional development for teachers in reading instruction, special help or tutoring for elementary students who are having trouble with reading skills, and family literacy programs for students and parents.

- The **Kentucky Reading Project**, regional training institutes for elementary school teachers with a special focus on reading instruction, has been created by the Collaborative for Center for Literacy Development.

- The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence has created a report and recommendations on reading and will continue to study this issue.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **Collaborative Center for Early Literacy Development**, University of Kentucky, (606) 257-6734
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Early Childhood/Early Reading Program**;.(502) 564-3064.

EXTENDED SCHOOL SERVICES

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Extended school services (ESS) programs are designed to provide ***additional instruction to help children*** experience success with school work. These services take place beyond the regular school day, week, or year. The only exception is that schools with an Early Reading Incentive Grant may use some of their ESS money as matching funds to provide individualized or small group reading instruction during the school day. (See Early Reading Program, page 18)

- The extended school services program is primarily intended to be an intervention model, to help students when they need it, not wait until they have fallen behind. Other students who have already fallen behind may receive remedial assistance. An accelerated approach can help these students to catch up with peers.

- Each school district is required to provide extended school services to meet student learning needs, and receives state monies for this program.

- Extended school programs take many forms including after-school instruction, evening sessions, Saturday activities, or summer programs. Times may vary, depending on students' needs. Support services such as transportation should be provided as necessary.

- Eligibility for these programs is determined by the district, based on students' needs for additional time to meet performance goals of the regular classroom. Districts should see that students with the greatest need are referred and served first.

RESULTS

- Most school districts offer summer school and after-school programs, although some are using funds for projects that support block scheduling and year-round school calendars.

- Extended school services programs throughout the state typically serve over 100,000 students each year. Many students can be promoted to the next grade or are able to graduate on time due to the program.

- The most common areas of study for students in the ESS programs are reading, writing, and mathematics.

- Districts that provide transportation report improved attendance. One hundred districts use 10 to 35 percent of their ESS funds for transportation. Eight-four use 0 to 9 percent.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- ✏ $36 million will be available to school districts during the 1999-2000 school year.
- ✏ Extended school services programs will focus more on helping students through early intervention to prevent failure.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Talk** with students and parents to learn how the extended school services programs in your district are helping students.
- ★ If your school has a school-based decision making council, **ask** how extended school services fit in with plans for the school. Suggest a committee on extended school services and volunteer to be a member. Ensure that all parents have a voice in the extended school services programs being provided.
- ★ If your school has a PTA/PTO/PTSA, **see** how it can help support extended school services.
- ★ **Volunteer** to be a teacher's aide or tutor in an extended school services program.
- ★ **Recognize** the contributions of teachers and administrators, and let them know you appreciate their contributions toward establishing good extended school services programs.
- ★ **Be sure** your extended school services programs are instructional programs, not merely study halls.
- ★ If your district does not provide transportation, **encourage** your local board to do so.
- ★ **Write** to your elected officials with examples of successes and weaknesses in extended school services. (See page 72 for information on how to contact state legislators.)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky Department of Education, Extended School Learning Branch** at (502) 564-3678 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us

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HIGH SCHOOLS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- The Kentucky Board of Education was directed by the 1990 General Assembly to review **graduation requirements** and consider whether changes were needed based on new goals for students also established in 1990.

- The **Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship Program** has been established by the state legislature to spend lottery funds on student scholarships to be used at Kentucky colleges, universities, and vocational programs. The amount students earn is based on their grade point average (GPA) each year of high school and their score on the ACT test. The higher the GPA and ACT score, the more scholarship money a student will earn with the maximum amount $2,500 a year and the minimum $125. (High school counselors can help students learn more about this scholarship.)

RESULTS

- In July 1992 the State Board of Education appointed a High School Restructuring Task Force composed of educators and citizens. It recommended changes in high schools to help more students meet learning goals and considered high school graduation requirements. The 1993 report was not adopted as a requirement but its recommendations were used in pilot projects.

- Sixty-eight high schools participated as pilot restructuring sites in a project that formally ended June 30, 1996. Twenty-seven schools were comprehensive restructuring sites with:

  - ✓ individual graduation plans
  - ✓ integrated academic portfolios
  - ✓ student-initiated culminating projects
  - ✓ school-sponsored and school-approved activities
  - ✓ exit reviews

- Forty-one schools were partial restructuring sites and addressed at least one of the above components. Some schools continue to use some or all of these ideas as part of their high graduation requirements.

- In the winter of 1996 a Commission on High School Graduation Requirements was appointed. That commission made recommendations to the state board in August, 1996. Final approval was given in the summer of 1997 to change **high school graduation** requirements (see page 23).

Minimum High School Graduation Requirements

Minimum High School Graduation Requirements until the Class of 2002		Minimum High School Graduation Requirements beginning with the Class of 2002		
Program Area	**Required Credits**	**Individual graduation plan which incorporates emphasis on career development**		
		Subject	**Credits**	**Courses**
Language Arts	4	**Language Arts**	4	English I, II, III, IV
Mathematics	3	**Social Studies**	3	Credits to incorporate U.S. History, Economics, Government, World Geography and World Civilization
Science	2			
Social Studies (includes U.S. History)	2			
Health	½	**Mathematics**	3	Algebra I, Geometry, and one elective
Physical Education	½	**Science**	3	Credits to include life science, physical science, and earth and space science
Total Required Units	12	**Health**	½	
Total Electives	8	**Physical Education**	½	
Grand Total	20	**Visual and Performing Arts**	1	History and appreciation of visual and performing arts or a performing arts course which incorporates such content
		Total: 15 required credits plus 7 electives (22 credits)		
		Note: Local school boards may substitute courses for required courses if they have the same content.		

- Recommendations to require **expanded high school transcripts** have been put on hold, but schools are encouraged to consider using them.

- ***Learning Equals Earning*** is a project of the Partnership for Kentucky Schools that encourages employers to request academic records from entry-level job applicants. Employers can see how well students did in school; in turn if students are asked for these records, they will be more motivated to do well in school. For more information contact the Partnership at (606) 455-9595.

- A 1998 report from the Partnership for Kentucky Schools, ***Ready for Work: Essential Skills for Kentucky Jobs***, identifies academic and job skills Kentucky employers need in their workers. It also lists suggests ways that schools, educators, and business owners can work to improve the education and skill level of Kentucky students. For a copy of the report, contact the Partnership at (606) 455-9595.

- The **Commonwealth Diploma Program**, begun in 1986, provides students with a special diploma for exceptional work in high school. It also offers students who score at or above an established cut-off point reimbursement for the cost of taking Advanced Placement Examinations.

WHAT TO EXPECT THIS YEAR

- Many high schools are thinking about or changing the way they schedule classes and what they expect from high school students.

- **The new high school graduation requirements** will be required of students who graduate in 2002 (this year's high school sophomores) so high schools must consider how they will help each student succeed with these higher expectations.

- The opportunity to earn **scholarships** based on high school grades should be an incentive for students to do better in school. It should also encourage more students who thought they could never afford college to consider furthering their education after high school.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Remind students** about the opportunity to earn scholarships. Encourage them to do well.

★ **Talk** with high school teachers, principals, counselors, advisors, and students about changes in their high schools.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Department of Education, Division of Leadership and School Improvement** (502) 564-2116 or the **Division of Curriculum and Assessment Development** (502)564-2106 or (800) 533-5372 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us
- **Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship Program,** Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority, (800) 928-8926 ext. 7397; or visit the Web site at http://www.kheaa.com

NOTES:

EXCEPTIONAL AND AT-RISK STUDENTS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

- **Exceptional students** are defined as those who differ from typical children in physical, mental, learning, emotional, or social characteristics and abilities to such a degree that they need special educational programs or services. This includes students with physical or mental handicaps, communication disorders, learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, and exceptional ability to perform at high levels (gifted and talented).

- Under **federal law**, all students with disabilities from age 3 to 21 years must have available to them a "free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living."

- In Kentucky students ages 3 through 21 with disabilities are served by public schools. Students eligible for these services must be offered an appropriate program in the "**least restrictive environment**." Public schools must ensure that children with disabilities are not removed from the regular education environment unless the nature and severity of their disability is such that education in the regular classroom with special aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Exceptional children programs as well as home and hospital instruction must be available for those who need it.

- The funding formula for Kentucky schools provides additional funding for those students defined as exceptional.

- A state law adopted in 1998 provides the following:

  ✓ Each exceptional student must have an individual education plan. School personnel and parents together decide the student's educational needs, the services needed, and the expected results. School staff must report on progress on this plan at least as often as school report cards are distributed. Administrative regulations will be developed by the Kentucky Board of Education to see that these education plans are monitored for compliance with federal laws and regulations. The State Board is authorized to provide assistance to districts that are not complying with these laws and withhold funds if they do not come into compliance. These funds can be returned once the district is following the laws.

- ✓ The Kentucky Special Education Mentor Program was established to select and train expert special education teachers and administrators and assign them to assist districts that are not complying with state and federal laws.

- ✓ The Kentucky Department of Education must provide statewide professional development on the characteristics and needs of exceptional and at-risk students.

- ✓ Exceptional students who choose to drop out of school, and their parents, must be interviewed to see why these students are leaving. This information will be used to develop programs to reduce the drop-out rate of these students.

GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

- Students with demonstrated or potential ability to perform at high levels are described as **gifted and talented** and include those with general intellectual aptitude, specific academic aptitude, creative or divergent thinking, psychological or leadership skills, and talents in the visual and performing arts. In Kentucky law they are also defined as **"exceptional"** students.

- The state provides additional funds for school districts, requiring them to provide special programs for students identified as **gifted and talented**.

- In 1998 a more permanent **State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education** was created and attached to the Department of Education. Its purpose is to make recommendations to the Kentucky Board of Education, the Department of Education, and the Education Professional Standards Board regarding services for gifted and talented students. It is composed of 19 members appointed by the governor and three non-voting ex-officio members.

- Gifted student services plans are required for gifted students as determined by a 1998 state law. Regulations are in process at this time. By 2001-02 districts must have a policy in place to meet this need. The Kentucky Department of Education will be providing assistance to districts to implement these plans. These plans will be different from those required by federal law for children with disabilities.

STUDENTS AT-RISK

- **Students at-risk for educational failure** are defined in the law as those whose family income qualifies them for the federal school lunch program. Kentucky law makes the following provisions to help at-risk students achieve academically through:

  - ✓ a commitment to provide all students with the opportunity to learn by including all children in the accountability program
  - ✓ preschool programs for 4-year-old children whose family income qualifies them for the school lunch program

- ✓ extended school services to allow additional instruction for students who need it
- ✓ family resource and youth services centers to address problems that interfere with student learning (Advisory councils for these centers must include adequate representation of parents of all students in their schools.)
- ✓ waiver or reduction of school fees for pupils who qualify for free and reduced price school lunches

- Title I funds from the federal government are available for some schools to help children from low-income families.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Talk** with and encourage students who have disabilities or special learning needs.

★ If you know parents whose children have special needs and who are struggling to help their children in school, suggest they **call one of the parent support groups** listed below.

★ **Call** the Department of Education if you believe children in your district who have special needs are not being well served (502) 564-4970.

★ **Recognize** the diverse needs of learners including academic, social, socioeconomic, gender, and cultural.

★ **Encourage** all parents to get involved in the PTA/PTO/PTSA. If your school does not have a PTA, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help (502) 564-4378.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Class Act Educational Resource Center**, 2359 Jackson School Road, Benton, KY 42025; (270) 527-1951
- **Directions Disability Link**, 1412 N. Broadway, Ste. 206, Lexington, KY 40505; (606) 233-9370 (data base of services for persons with disabilities; Lexington area only)
- **Kentucky Assistive Technology Service (KATS) Network**, 8412 Westport Road, Louisville, KY 40242; (800) 327-5287; e-mail: katsnet@iglu.com or visit the Web site at http:\\www.katsnet .com (information and referral to individuals with disabilities)
- **Kentucky Association for Gifted Education (KAGE)**; P.O. Box 9610, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42012-9610; (270) 745-6323
- **Kentucky Autism Training Center**, (502) 852-4631 or (800) 334-8635 x4631; or visit the Web site at www.louisville.edu/medschool/katc/ A manual, *Technical Assistance for Autism* is available from the Kentucky Department of Education; (502) 564-2672
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Exceptional Children Services**, Capital Plaza Tower, 8th floor, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 564-4970 or for gifted education (502) 564-2672 or (800) 533-5372 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Learning Strategies Branch (gifted and talented education)**, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 564-2672 or (800) 533-5372
- **Kentucky Disabilities Coalition,** 859 East Main Street, Suite 3A, Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 875-1871 or (800) 977-7505; fax (502) 857-1982 (coalition of over 80 organizations that can refer callers to appropriate support groups)
- **Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children**, 100 Fair Oak Lane, 4th Floor, 4 W-C, Frankfort, KY 40621
- **Kentucky Special Parent Involvement Network (KY SPIN)**, 2210 Goldsmith Lane, Suite 118, Louisville, KY 40218; (800) 525-7746 or Louisville area (502) 456-0923; e-mail: familytrng@aol.com or SPININC@aol.com; fax (502) 456-0893 (training, information and support to parents and families of children with all types of disabilities)
- **Learning Disabilities Association of Kentucky, Inc., (LDA of Kentucky)** 2210 Goldsmith Lane, Suite 222, Louisville, Kentucky 40218; (502) 473-1256
- **Office of Family Leadership, Department of Mental Health**, 100 Fair Oak Lane, 4th Floor, 4 W-C, Frankfort, KY 40621; (502) 564-7610 (support and information for families of children with emotional and behavioral problems)
- **Parent Information Network of Kentucky (PINK),** P.O. Box 5266, Louisville, KY 40255-0266; (502) 452-9802; fax: (502) 485-0035; e-mail: vwb511@aol.com (information and networking with other families of children with disabilities)
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **Protection and Advocacy Division,** 100 Fair Oaks Lane, 3rd floor, Frankfort, KY 40601; (800) 372-2988 (protection of rights for persons with disabilities and mental illnesses)
- **The Spina Bifida Association of Kentucky**, 982 Eastern Parkway, Box 18, Louisville, KY 40217; (502) 637-7363; e-mail: KYSBA@aol.com (information and referral service for families and individuals affected by spina bifida)

NOTES:

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION: LEARNING, REPRESENTATION, AND EMPLOYMENT

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **Teacher in-service programs** must include effective awareness and sensitivity training to help teachers motivate and nurture students of diverse cultures.
- **School-based decision making councils** in schools with eight percent or more minority students must have minority representation.
- **Family Resource and Youth Services Center Advisory Councils** must have adequate representation of parents of the students represented in their schools.
- **Superintendent screening committees** in districts with eight percent or more minority students must have minority representation.
- Appointments to **state boards and commissions** must include reasonable minority representation.
- Criteria for **textbook selection** must include the contributions to society of people of all ethnic backgrounds.
- The law requires superintendents to seek **minority applicants** when vacancies exist.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

→ The Kentucky Department of Education has a new Division of Equity with a staff of seven persons. Part of its responsibility is to assist schools in creating and maintaining equitable opportunities for learning, providing multi-cultural education and cultural diversity.

RESULTS

- The Education Equity Task Force has been created to monitor progress and make recommendations for helping schools address issues of equity. They have developed **A Plan for Education Equity.** For more information or a copy of the plan, call the Division of Equity in the Department of Education at (502) 564-8137.
- The Education Equity Task Force created an **Equity Analysis and Data Gathering Instrument** to assist local schools and districts in evaluating the effectiveness of their work in creating equitable school environments. Contact the Division of Equity, (502) 564-8137 for a copy of this document.

- The Education Professional Standards Board has a plan to attract and recruit minority students to the teaching profession. The following is a result of that plan:

  - ✓ a Division of Minority Educator Recruitment and Retention Division was established in the Department of Education in 1995
  - ✓ 109 minority teachers have graduated through the Alternative Routes to Certification program, and 96 have completed all requirements for certification
  - ✓ scholarship funds for minority teachers increased from $524,000 for the 1997-98 school year to $895,000 in 1998-99; to date 242 minority students have benefitted
  - ✓ 10 middle and high school programs have been established to encourage students to consider teaching as a career
  - ✓ the Kentucky Department of Education in collaboration with the Kentucky Alliance of Black School Educators has held parent involvement workshops in Paducah, Hopkinsville, and at the University of Kentucky in Lexington. An additional workshop is planned for the fall of 1999 in Louisville.

- An **Administrative Leadership Institute** has been established by the Department of Education, the Kentucky Alliance of Black School Educators, and Western Kentucky University. This institute will develop and certify principals of color for Kentucky schools. Fifteen educators are enrolled this year. A second component of the institute focusing on superintendents began in January, 1999 with five candidates. Contact the Division of Minority Educator Recruitment and Retention at (502) 573-4606 for more information.

- The Kentucky Alliance of Black Educators and the Department of Education have developed a **New Teacher Orientation/Induction and Refinement Conference** to orient new teachers, help them meet Kentucky's teacher goals, and form a network of teachers who can support one another. The next conference, "Standing in the Gap: Are You Assisting, Bridging, or Contributing?" is scheduled September 24-25, 1999. Contact the Division of Minority Educator Recruitment and Retention at (502) 573-4606 for more information.

- Despite all of these efforts there are no minority superintendents among Kentucky's 176 school districts; 13 of the superintendents are women.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Plan** a workshop for minority parents in your community. Contact the Division of Minority Educator Recruitment and Retention at (502) 573-4606 for more information.

★ **Ask** how schools and districts address equity and diversity in district consolidated plans. Get a copy of the Equity Analysis and Data Gathering Instrument from the Division of Equity.

★ **Talk** with and encourage students from all backgrounds. See what they think about themselves and students from diverse cultures. Encourage all students to do well. Remind

them about the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarships available for all Kentucky students, (See page 22)

★ **Recognize** the diverse needs of learners including academic, social, socioeconomic, gender, and cultural differences.

★ **Look for and encourage** the use of instructional materials that are accurate and free of stereotypes.

★ **Include** persons from all backgrounds on school or community committees. **Suggest** persons from various cultural groups who might share information with your child's class.

★ If you observe that your child's school is not sensitive to the needs of diverse students, **suggest** an awareness workshop. Call the Kentucky Department of Education for more information at (502) 564-8137 and visit its Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us.

★ **Sponsor** a school social event that involves families from different cultures to share foods, customs, and so on.

★ **Encourage** minority students to consider teaching as a career.

★ If your school has a school-based decision making council, **encourage** minority candidates to run for council positions and participate on council committees. Ask the council how it will incorporate minority issues and contributions in its school plan.

★ **Encourage** parents of minority students to get involved in the PTA/PTO/PTSA. If your school does not have a PTA, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help at (502) 564-4378.

★ **Ask** your superintendent how your district encourages minority applicants.

★ **Visit** your schools. Look at textbooks, library books, magazines, and other materials to see how they include information about and contributions from persons of diverse social and cultural backgrounds. Encourage schools to include such information.

★ **Get involved** with the Kentucky Education Reform African-American and All Children's Caucus. Contact them at 1718 W. Jefferson, Louisville, KY 40203, (502) 852-5506 for more information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Equity** at (502) 564-8137 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us
- **The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights**, (800) 292-5566
- **The Kentucky Education Reform African-American and All Children's Caucus**, (502) 852-5506.

NOTES:

SCHOOL-BASED DECISION MAKING

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **School-based decision making (SBDM)** is a shared process in which most of the policies and plans for instruction are made at the local school. It gives teachers, principals, and parents the authority to determine the direction for their schools.

- School-based decision making was enacted to **improve student learning**, by letting the people closest to the children make educational decisions.

- School councils usually include six people: the principal (who usually is the chairperson), three teachers (elected by teachers), and two parents (elected by parents in the school).

- In schools with a student population of eight percent or more minority, schools must have **minority representation** on the council. If after the regular election there is not a minority member on the council, all parents may vote to elect a minority parent. In addition, all teachers vote to elect a minority teacher. If there are no minority teachers in the school, another teacher is elected by the faculty. If minority teachers at the school do not want to serve, no additional teacher is elected.

- Each school council makes **policy decisions** about:

  - ✓ curriculum
  - ✓ instruction and instructional materials including textbooks
  - ✓ assignment of students and use of space
  - ✓ daily schedule
  - ✓ discipline and classroom management
  - ✓ staff positions at the school
  - ✓ assignment of staff time
  - ✓ extracurricular programs and student participation policies
  - ✓ procedures, consistent with local board policy, for determining alignment with state standards, use of technology, and program evaluation
  - ✓ school budget, including professional development funds, and beginning in 2000 the use of school reward money

- In addition, when there is a **vacancy**, the council selects the principal and consults with the principal in hiring teachers and other personnel.

- School councils that use **committees** to do their work must establish policies to facilitate the involvement of parents, classified staff members such as secretaries, cafeteria workers, and custodians, and other interested persons on these committees.

- Council members serve **1-year terms.** Councils may choose to set 2-year terms but if they do, council members cannot hold consecutive terms.

- School councils set **policies**, but principals continue day-to-day operation and management of the schools.

- All schools must have councils, with three exceptions: schools that are the only ones in the district may be exempt; teachers and parents in schools that meet their school learning goals may vote to exempt themselves from school-based decision making; most alternative schools are exempt.

- School council members are required to receive **training** each year. New members must attend at least six hours, including information on the authority, duties, and responsibilities of council members. Those who have served one year or more must attend at least three hours. This training must be conducted by persons endorsed by the Department of Education and must be completed no later than 30 days after members have taken office. Those members who fill a vacancy have 30 days after taking office to complete this training.

- The **definition of parent** for school council purposes was changed in 1996 to include parent, stepparent, or foster parent of a student, or a person who has legal custody of a student pursuant to a court order and with whom the student resides.

- **Parents may vote** for school council members only if their child will be a student attending that school during the year in which the council serves. For example, parents of seniors may not vote in the high school election unless they have another child who will attend high school the next year, and parents of middle school graduates may vote in the high school council election where their student will attend.

- Local school boards may require **annual reports** from councils to describe a school's progress in reaching the educational goals set by law and the district.

- In schools where the school accountability goals are met, teachers and parents **may vote to be exempt from** school-based decision making. At least 25 parents of students enrolled in the school must participate in this vote.

- Certain district-operated entities such as vocational, alternative, and special education schools and preschools are **exempt from the requirement to implement SBDM**.

- The 1998 General Assembly included three changes in school-based decision making in the budget bill. The budget bill is effective only until July, 2000. These changes will lapse at that time unless the legislature passes additional laws to make these changes permanent.

    - **Parents may serve** as school council members if they work or have relatives working in another school the district. Parents may not serve if they or their relatives work in the

school in which the parent will serve on the council or in the district central office. In the past parents could not serve if they worked in the school district or had relatives working in the district.

- **Teachers may serve** as members of the school council regardless of their place of residence. In the past teachers could not serve if they lived outside the state of Kentucky.

- Each school council must adopt a policy relating to the ways in which the **principal consults with the council when hiring** teachers and other staff members. This policy must include at the very least meetings, timelines, interviews, reviews of written applications, and reviews of references.

- Other 1998 changes that affect school councils include:

  ✓ Beginning with the 1998-2000 school accountability cycle, the school council will decide how **reward funds** will be spent. In schools without a council, that decision will be made by the principal.

  ✓ The 1998 **school safety bill** requires that school council policies on discipline and behavior must be consistent with school district policy. It also required schools to study safety and discipline issues during the 1998-99 school year and prepare district-wide and school safety plans.

  ✓ School boards in districts with **recycling** facilities are required to adopt a plan and procedures for recycling white paper and cardboard. Boards may assign this task to school councils.

  ✓ School boards may establish **district-wide standards of behavior** that students must demonstrate in order to participate in extracurricular activities. These standards apply in addition to school council policies on participation.

  ✓ Rules on **classified staff** have changed giving them more employment rights. In cases where classified staff persons have the right to a job, the district superintendent may be allowed to assign them to a particular school, without agreement from the council or principal.

  ✓ The **cost of training or professional development for parent members** of school councils or committees may be paid for with school's professional development funds.

RESULTS

- As of July 1, 1999, there were 1,224 school councils with 1,224 principals, 4,000 teachers, and 2,500 parents making important school decisions.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- School councils are getting more involved in planning for school improvements which should result in more focus on curriculum and instruction. Watch for ongoing work on the school **consolidated plan.**

- Councils should be paying more attention to professional development that helps teachers work with students to improve academic achievement.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Get involved**. If your school has an SBDM council, run for a school council seat or volunteer to serve on a council committee. Attend council meetings and share your opinions with your parent and teacher representatives.

★ **Work** to elect parent and teacher representatives to your school council who care about all the children in the school. People who have one gripe or one issue in mind usually do not make the best council members.

★ If there is a PTA/PTO/PTSA in your school, **ask** for programs about SBDM. If there is no PTA in your school, form one. A PTA can inform parents and work to elect good council members. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help (502) 564-4378.

★ The Prichard Committee has volunteer attorneys and meeting facilitators who assist councils with their work. **Let your council know about this service**. For more information call (800) 928-2111 or Lexington area 233-9849.

★ If you have a school council, **consider** joining the Kentucky Association of School Councils and attending its fall conference. For more information call (606) 238-2188.

★ **Recognize** the contributions of school council members as they work to improve your school. Let them know you appreciate their time and commitment to your school. Recognize administrators and board members who support school councils.

★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members how they are supporting school councils and helping them make the best decisions for students.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Instructional Leadership Development** (502) 564-4201, or the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us (go to *parents* or *management support programs*). The department has produced a useful guide to school-based decision making with a 1998 update entitled ***Synergy***. The newest version is on CD-ROM. Copies were provided to every school in Kentucky; ask your principal or school librarian to show you the copy at your school. This guide and the update can be purchased from the Department of Education for $76; call (502) 564-3421 to order.
- **The Kentucky Association of School Councils** is an organization of school councils that offers good information, workshops, and literature. Contact them at (606) 238-2188.
- **The Kentucky PTA** has a handbook on school-based decision making that is especially useful in conducting school council elections. Call (502) 564-4378 for a copy.

NOTES:

FAMILY RESOURCE/YOUTH SERVICES CENTERS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Kentucky law provides **family resource and youth services centers** to help students and their families who face social, economic, or health barriers that interfere with learning. Schools are eligible to apply for grants to have centers if at least one-fifth of the students qualify for free school meals. Grants to fund the centers are provided through the state Cabinet for Families and Children. Family resource centers serve elementary schools; youth services centers serve middle and high schools.

- The coordinators at the centers identify problems, and link students and families to local resources and agencies that help students be more ready to learn.

- Resource centers are guided by **local advisory councils** which must include parents, service providers, and educators. One third of the members must be parents. Students serve on councils for youth services centers.

- The Cabinet for Families and Children oversees the Office of Family Resource and Youth Services Centers with nine regional coordinators who provide technical assistance and training to center staff and school districts. These regional coordinators are housed in sites across the state. Three are located at Regional Service Centers (see page 56).

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

→ Additional funds were allocated for 37 new centers in the 1999-2000 school year.

RESULTS

- As of July 1, 1999 there were **638 centers** in place serving **1,007 schools** and **473,000 students**.

- Kentucky has 329 family resource centers, 182 youth services centers, and 127 combined family resources and youth services centers.

- **Research** shows that family resource and youth services centers have:

  ✓ increased parental involvement
  ✓ brought school readiness to a higher level
  ✓ allowed students to experience strong gains in academic proficiency
  ✓ decreased the drop-out rate at the elementary level

- Approximately 124 schools are eligible for centers, but have not been funded.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Volunteer** to participate on a Family Resource or Youth Services Center Advisory Council.

★ If your school qualifies for a center but has not received a grant, **volunteer** to participate on the grant writing committee.

★ **Suggest a Parents and Teachers Talking Together** meeting be conducted through your center. This is a way resource centers can involve parents and determine more about school needs. Contact the Prichard Committee for more information, (800) 928-2111.

★ If your school has a school-based decision making council, **ask** council members what their plans are for coordinating with or establishing a center. Suggest that the school council, resource center advisory council, and PTA board meet together once or twice a year to coordinate plans and activities.

★ **Volunteer** at your center. See what needs you, your church, or other organizations can provide.

★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask members what experiences they have had with centers and what the board is doing to support the centers.

★ **Write** to your elected officials with examples of successes or problems with Family Resource and Youth Services Centers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Cabinet for Families and Children,** Office of Family Resource and Youth Services Centers, (502) 564-4986

NOTES:

SCHOOL SAFETY

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- The 1998 General Assembly passed a **school safety bill** to provide every student access to a safe, secure, and orderly school that is conducive to learning. It has many provisions including the following:

  ✓ Schools and districts must have **plans, policies, and procedures** for assisting students who are at risk of school failure and who engage in disruptive or disorderly behavior.

  ✓ A **Center for School Safety** was established in 1999 at Eastern Kentucky University. Its mission includes: serving as a central point for data collection, analysis, and research; distributing information about research and safety programs, and providing technical assistance and training for schools and communities. This center is governed by a board of directors appointed by the governor, representing most agencies that deal with children. This board reports to the Secretary of the Education, Arts, and Humanities Cabinet in the governor's office.

  ✓ The Kentucky Department of Education is responsible for **establishing and maintaining a statewide data collection system** for information related to: school violence; possession of weapons or drugs; student arrests, and the number of suspensions, expulsions, and corporal punishment. It is also responsible for setting discipline code guidelines and for awarding grants to districts to establish alternative education programs. The department also works collaboratively with the Center for School Safety to develop, promote, and disseminate information about school safety.

  ✓ During the 1998-99 year, each **school assessed its school safety and student discipline** guidelines. Schools that did not complete this study are not be eligible for school safety grants.

  ✓ During the 1998-99 school year, each school district completed an assessment of school safety and discipline, using data from the individual school assessments. Each school board adopted a **school safety and discipline plan**. This plan was used in applying for school safety grants.

  ✓ School boards must adopt **district codes of acceptable student behavior and discipline codes,** publish them in all school handbooks for parents and students, and post them in all schools. Those policies must include the expulsion of students who have or sell drugs or controlled substances at school, who have physically assaulted, battered, or abused staff or students at school or school functions, or who bring weapons to school. All school employees and parents shall be provided a copy of the codes.

- ✓ School boards must establish a process for a two-way communication system for teachers and staff to notify administrators of an emergency.

- ✓ Students who have been expelled must be offered educational services in an alternative school program, unless there is clear and convincing evidence that they pose a threat to the safety of students or school staff or that the student cannot be placed in a state-funded agency program.

- ✓ Exceptional children cannot be suspended or expelled if the behavior is related to their disability, unless there is threat to the safety of other students, staff, or themselves. Then they must be placed in an alternative program or receive alternative services.

- ✓ Primary school students shall not be suspended unless their presence poses a safety threat to other children, staff, or themselves.

- ✓ Principals are required to report to law enforcement officials any assault causing serious injury or involving a weapon, sexual offense, kidnaping, drug or illegal controlled substance offense, or property damage on school property.

- ✓ Certain school staff will have access to more information from the courts about violent offenders who are enrolled in their school.

- ✓ Courts must notify principals within five (5) days when students are convicted of charges such as assault or sexual, firearms, weapons or drugs offenses.

- Another 1998 law requires both state and national criminal checks on all newly-hired certified staff (teachers, administrators, etc.) and state criminal checks on all classified employees (secretaries, custodians, bus drivers).

RESULTS

- 125 school districts received grants to help improve school safety for the 1999-2000 school year.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Become familiar** with your district and school discipline codes.

★ **Offer** to serve on the school or district committees studying safety and discipline issues.

★ **Work** with your PTA/PTO/PTSA to plan programs that inform and solicit the assistance of parents in establishing a safe and orderly environment in your school.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky Department of Education**, Office of District Support Services, (502) 564-3930 or (800) 533-5372 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us

NOTES:

TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **Technology** includes computers, instructional and administrative software, telephones, telecommunications, interactive television, satellite, and microwave communication.

- The Kentucky Board of Education has adopted a **master plan for technology** to improve learning and teaching and facilitate administrative functions, such as financial management, pupil attendance, etc.

- The **vision** is to ensure equal access, enable students to use technology to become independent life-long learners, prepare teachers to use technology to raise student achievement, and equip Kentucky's children to work in the Information Age.

- The Kentucky Board of Education is required to establish regulations to **prevent sexually explicit material** from being transmitted through technology. Schools and school districts must use the latest available technology to prevent use of such materials. School districts must establish policies on Internet access.

- The Department of Education is required to **conduct a study** of the effective use of technology including classroom use and effects, training for teachers, ratios of computers to students and teachers, use by administrators, effectiveness and use of funds given to local districts, and expenditures by districts.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

→ In response to legislation enacted in 1998, every Kentucky school is taking steps to prevent sexually explicit material from being transmitted through the technology network. As required by regulations enacted by the Kentucky Board of Education, schools and districts are installing special filtering software on their networks, revising policies for student and faculty use of Internet and electronic mail, and limiting student use of electronic mail to the statewide system which includes the capability to monitor and track e-mail activity. (See http://www.kde.state.ky.us/oet/planning/sb230/sb230.asp for more information.)

→ The Department of Education is participating in several national and regional studies on the effective use of technology in the classroom. In August, 1998, the Milken Foundation released an analysis of Kentucky's technology implementation as part of a national study. Milken's conclusion: "Kentucky clearly has made progress toward fully implementing technology in all its schools. It looks strong in comparison to the overall findings of the 21 states, which are themselves likely above the national average in school technology achievements."
(The entire report may be viewed at http://www.kde.state.ky.us/oet/planning/milkenrpt/Kentucky.pdf)

➔ Technology standards for new and experienced teachers are proceeding through the administrative regulation process. This means that every new teacher and every experienced teacher will soon be required to demonstrate that he or she can use technology to support instruction, to access and manipulate data, to enhance professional growth and productivity, to communicate and collaborate with colleagues, parents, and the community, and to conduct research and solve problems.
(These standards may be viewed at http://www.kde.state.ky.us/otec/epsb/standards/proposed_tech_std.asp)

RESULTS

- Implementation of the Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) is described in a **Master Plan for Education Technology.** Originally adopted in 1992, the plan is updated every two years to reflect progress, update the budget, and incorporate new standards and policies. Every school district has a local technology plan which describes how the local district will implement the statewide plan. (See the 1998 Master Plan Update at http://www.kde.state.ky.us/oet/planning/mpupdate98/mp98toc.asp)

- **Equity and equitable access** is an underlying theme of KETS. Low-income and high-income districts in Kentucky have equal access to technology funds, equal access to quality of service, and equal buying power.

- **Standards** for the purchase of technology have been established, and the state must bid for technology equipment to get the best price. State KETS funds can only be used for equipment that meets KETS standards.

- **State funds are matched** by local districts for the purchase of technology equipment. The amount of money local districts spend significantly exceeds what is required by law.

- As of June 1999, Kentucky schools had:

  ✓ 1 networked computer capable of running multimedia software for every 8 students,
  ✓ 1 computer for every 1 ½ teachers,
  ✓ approximately 75 percent of classrooms with **access to the Internet**, and

  ✓ 85 percent have **e-mail,**
  ✓ 50 percent have a **home page**, and
  ✓ 40 percent have **telephones.**

- The goal is one computer for every six students, one for every teacher, and every classroom with a direct, high-speed connection to the Internet. About once every two years, state funds are made available to replace older computers which can no longer run the best instructional software or support network access.

- Every school district and every school has a technology coordinator. The Kentucky Board of Education encourages districts to have a dedicated instructional technology specialist who can work with teachers so they can use technology in the curriculum. New policies allow districts to use state technology funds for this purpose.

- Since 1992, **almost $500 million** in state and local funds have been spent on technology: 55 percent for student workstations; 15 percent for teacher workstations; 13 percent for network components; 8 percent for instructional software, and the balance for teacher professional development, assistive technology, and printers.

- Since June 1995, all of Kentucky's 176 school districts have been **connected to the statewide computer network**. By September 1999, over 85 percent of Kentucky schools will have direct, high-speed access to the KETS Network. Until all schools have high speed connections, toll-free dial-in services are available via modem.

- The **Student Technology Leadership Program** was initiated in 1994. This school-based program allows students to apply their technology skills to solve school and community problems, and is currently in place in over 400 schools.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- All school districts must submit updates each year to their unmet need reports for the use of technology. The **plans** must comply with the state master plan. The technology plan is now a part of the new consolidated plan.

- School districts will continue to purchase technology equipment and instructional software with state and local dollars. State funds will be matched by local funds. The General Assembly had allocated $20 million per year for technology but because of a government surplus **$65 million** was available for technology in 1998-99.

- Teachers and technology coordinators continue to use **professional development** to learn more about the use of technology for educational purposes.

- District administrators continue to learn how to use the new computerized financial management system. This affects school council budgeting and purchasing.

- Kentucky soon will probably adopt the standards established by the International Society for Technology Education which describes what students should know and be able to do with technology. Contact their Web site http://www.ISTE.org for more information.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Find out** what is happening with technology in your school or school district. How many computers are available to students? For how long each week does each student get to work

on a computer? Does your school have high speed connections to the Internet? What are some of the programs students use, and what do they use computers for?

★ To learn more, **review** the district plan. Be aware that technology planning for 1998-2000 has been integrated into the school-based consolidated planning. Become active in your school's planning, and be an advocate for technology that is thoroughly integrated into the curriculum of your school by focusing on:

- ✓ Staff technology competencies and professional development for teachers
- ✓ Integration of technology with learner outcomes and core content
- ✓ Role of technology in assisting students achieve at higher levels
- ✓ Curriculum strengths and weaknesses
- ✓ Utilization of technology purchased prior to the KETS program in combination with the new equipment

★ If you are able to access a computer and modem, **visit** the Kentucky Department of Education Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us to learn more about technology and consolidated planning. This system links Kentuckians—educators, parents, community leaders, and anyone who wants to know more about up-to-date KETS negotiated prices, KETS standards, and information. If you don't have a computer at home or work, try using one at school or your local public library.

★ **Talk** with students about the technology that they are exposed to or know about. Ask them how much time they spend on computers and how computers are used for learning in their school.

★ **Encourage** your school principal and staff to attend the annual Kentucky Education Technology Conference (March 2-4, 2000 in Louisville) as a professional development activity.

★ If your school has a school-based decision making council, **ask** what the council's plans are for technology. Volunteer to be a member of the technology committee.

★ If your school has a PTA/PTO, **ask** what it can do to help. If there is no PTA/PTO, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help at (502) 564-4378.

★ If you have computer expertise, **volunteer** to tutor students, help develop the local district or school plan, or participate with the Student Technology Leadership Program.

★ **Recognize** the contributions of teachers and administrators in developing technology in your school or district, and let them know you appreciate their contributions.

★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask board members what their goals are for technology in the schools and how they plan to help teachers improve their technology skills.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Education Technology** at (502) 564-2020 ext. 302, or visit the Web site at *http://www.kde.state.ky.us*
- **The Technology Assistance Team at the Regional Service Center** in your area (see page 56).

NOTES:

VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL EDUCATION:
PREPARING STUDENTS FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- By law, Kentucky measures school success on several factors including the proportion of students who make a **successful transition** from school to work, postsecondary education, or the military.
- The **purpose** of vocational/technical education is to develop problem-solving skills, teach basic and advanced academic skills in a technological setting, and provide experience in all aspects of an industry students are preparing to enter.
- Students may participate in **authentic learning experiences** in vocational initiatives such as cooperative education, pre-apprenticeship, mentoring, shadowing, and community service.
- An **Individual Graduation plan** will be developed by all students graduating from high school indicating a career objective and a planned course of study necessary for a successful transition to adult life.
- The 1996 General Assembly established an **Office of School-to-Work** in the Workforce Development Cabinet. This office convenes representatives of business, labor, education, and government to develop and implement a system to help students make the transition from school to work, based on funding available from the federal School-to-Work Act.
- The 1998 General Assembly passed House Bill 724 which established a **School to Careers** system. It will serve as an umbrella for career-related programs in the public schools, including Tech Prep, School-to-Work, and High Schools That Work.

RESULTS

- Listed below are the statewide averages of **transition results** for 1997 graduates. These figures do not take into account the number of students who drop out of school:

  ✓ Attended college - 51 percent
  ✓ Attended vocational technical school - 4.8 percent
  ✓ Employed - 30.4 percent
  ✓ Entered military - 3.1 percent
  ✓ Combined school and work - 5.9 percent
  ✓ Not Successful - 4.8 percent

- The following initiatives are being implemented across the state. They focus on keeping students in school, improving their preparation for the workforce, and increasing successful transition rates:

  ✓ **School-To-Work** is a systematic effort that begins at the primary level and goes through the high school and postsecondary levels. It is coordinated through local partnerships of schools, business, labor, and government, which work to design programs that fit their own communities. The key to School-To-Work success is the working partnership between employers and schools.

  School-To-Work is designed so students see the relationship between their education and the world of work. It helps students and parents understand the importance of the educational choices they make and how these affect their career choices and opportunities. It also helps students develop skills needed to be successful in the workplace.

  The focus at the primary level is on awareness of various careers. At the middle schools the focus is on career exploration, and at the high school and postsecondary levels, the focus is on career preparation. Employers are involved in several areas: being classroom speakers; opening their businesses to field trips; serving as advisors for a school-based enterprise; providing input into the curriculum; offering unpaid or paid work-based learning opportunities for students, and planning activities in cooperation with schools.

  School-To-Work must include:

  - a combination of school-based and work-based learning
  - an opportunity for students to complete a career major
  - an integration of academic and occupational or technical education
  - a link between high schools and postsecondary education (vocational/technical schools, community colleges)

  Kentucky was one of eight states to receive a **school-to-work implementation grant** of $24 million over a 5-year period. Most of these funds have been provided to the local partnership councils. The School-to-Work grant sunsets as of September 30, 1999 The Office of School-to-Work has made application to the U.S. Department of Labor for State Implementation Grant Supplemental Funds.

  ✓ **Tech Prep** is a program of study that combines at least two years of high school with a minimum of two years postsecondary education in a planned sequence of classes. It integrates academic, vocational, and technical instruction; utilizes work-based and worksite learning related to students' career goals where appropriate and available; provides technical preparation in a career field such as engineering technology, applied science, mechanical, industrial, or practical art or trade, agriculture, health occupations, and business; builds student competence in mathematics, science, reading, writing,

communications, economics, and workplace skills; leads to an associate or a baccalaureate degree or a postsecondary certificate in a specific career field; leads to placement in appropriate employment or to further education.

✓ **Jobs for Kentucky Graduates Program** has been implemented in high schools to address learning goals for students, drop-out prevention, and school-to-work transition designed to meet the needs of at-risk students. Each program has enrolled 30 to 40 students, juniors and seniors at risk of dropping out or not becoming successfully employed. A teacher (specialist) concentrates on providing students with extra help in job readiness skills and academic support. Students also receive intensive case management and support services. Upon graduation from high school, these students will receive assistance in finding a job.

✓ **High Schools That Work** is designed to combine challenging academic courses and modern vocational studies to raise the educational achievement of career-bound students. The focus is on school-wide revitalization that improves the academic and technical standards of the high school curriculum. Low level academic and technical courses are eliminated; higher performance standards are set for students. Support services are included through such activities as advisor-advisee (a plan where students are assigned to the same advisor throughout their high school years) and extended school services to help students achieve the new standards. Kentucky currently has 100 High Schools That Work sites. The following practices are key to its success:

- higher student expectations
- increased access to challenging vocational/technical studies
- rigorous and relevant academic studies
- students completing a focused program of studies based on a career major
- opportunities for students to participate in work-based learning
- teachers working together to plan and deliver integrated instruction
- students actively engaged in the learning process
- guidance and advising systems available for all students
- extra help for students to complete an accelerated learning program
- use of student assessments/evaluations for continuous improvement

✓ A **Schools to Careers** system was created to provide matching funds to districts or groups of districts to aid in development and implementation of work preparation and education opportunities for all students beginning in kindergarten. The program is seen as a method of maintaining the momentum created by the federal School-to-Work implementation grant by providing state and local resources. Goals of the program include reducing drop-out and remediation rates; increasing postsecondary entrance and completion rates; improving life skills, curriculum development, and instructional methods; providing students opportunities to receive occupational skill standards certification as well as a Career Major Certificate; increasing the number faculty participating in business/industry externships; increasing the number of business, industry, and labor partnerships; meeting the needs of special populations. Kentucky currently has seven School to Careers sites (districts or groups of districts). Efforts

toward expanding additional School to Careers sites are in progress pending additional allocation of state funds.

✓ **Vocational student organizations** are providing opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, teamwork, communications, and community service. The following organizations are available to high school students enrolled in vocational education: FFA (agriculture), FBLA (business), FHA (family and consumer sciences), DECA (marketing), TSA (technology), VICA (industrial education), and HOSA (health sciences).

✓ **Secondary vocational/technical education programs** are available in 171 school districts offering programs in grades 7 through 12. Programs and curricula are being restructured based on new and emerging occupations to prepare students for all aspects of an industry. All vocational areas are providing instructional programs designed around career clusters and majors such as health or business careers, agriculture, construction, transportation, manufacturing, and human services.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Get involved** in promoting career awareness and planning by assisting with career days/fairs or by being a guest speaker.

★ **Serve** on advisory committees or task forces to identify skills necessary for the work place to be included in the curriculum.

★ **Encourage** school-based decision making councils to support vocational/technical programs in high schools with funds necessary for hands-on activities.

★ **Talk** to teachers and students in vocational/technical programs for their views of the programs.

★ **Serve** as a judge for student organizations' competitive events.

★ **Write** to your elected state and federal officials with specific examples of successes and problems you have noted.

★ **Attend** local school board meetings to ask about their responsibility for vocational programs.

★ **Recognize** student achievement in vocational programs and the contributions of teachers and administrators.

★ **Participate** in your local school-to-work partnership council or provide school-to-work learning opportunities for students participating in the program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky Department of Education Division of Secondary Vocational Education** at (502) 564-3472 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us
- **The Cabinet for Workforce Development** at (502) 564-6606
- **The Office of School-To-Work** at (502) 564-5901

NOTES:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **Professional development** for teachers and other certified employees is required. Teachers are required to attend four days of professional development each year. Time is set aside in the school calendar for that purpose.

- The law requires that 65 percent of a district's **professional development funds** be allocated to school councils, so teachers, parents, and the principal at the school can determine what additional training is needed to improve student performance.

- The **Effective Instructional Leadership Act** creates a statewide program to improve and maintain quality of instructional leadership in Kentucky. All principals are required to have training each year in the effective evaluation of teachers.

- **Superintendents** are required to complete specific training programs in addition to their certification requirements in order to be employed as a superintendent in Kentucky.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

→ **The Star Teacher Leadership Academy** has been created to provide a systematic leadership development program for principals and teachers. Forty of 60 schools that did not meet school learning goals and will be receiving assistance from school consultants will participate in the academy this year, including over 300 educators.

RESULTS

- **Additional funds** have been provided for professional development since the 1990-91 school year. Currently school districts receive $23 per pupil.

- Every district and every school has a **professional development plan**.

- The Kentucky Department of Education has re-organized the eight regional service centers to focus more on teaching and learning. Specialists will be available in content areas such as mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies. The purpose is to offer teachers the assistance and professional development they need to offer high quality instruction and continuous student improvement

- The **Kentucky Leadership Academy**, a 2-year training program, has been created to provide additional professional development for principals. The second group of 375 educators will

begin this year. Those who participated in first academy (325 educators) have formed an alumni group to network and share ideas with each other.

- Two special programs are focusing on mathematics in Region 8 (southeastern Kentucky). The **Leadership for Region 8** (KL8) offers a network and additional training for math teachers. The **National Faculty** is a joint project of the Region 8 Service Center, the University of Louisville, and the Department of Education. They bring teams of teachers together for a week of professional development in mathematics with national experts. This is a 3-year program (1998-2001). For more information call the Region 8 Service Center (606) 886-0205.

- The **Kentucky Department of Education** has developed a research-based strategy for schools and districts to use in analyzing their current professional development programs and policies. The goal is to create a local professional development structure that supports the school as a learning community focused on teacher and student success.

- There is an increased **integration of technology** in professional development through academic villages, teacher electronic networks, and the annual Kentucky Education Technology Conference.

- The **Commonwealth Institute for Teachers** is held each summer and provides special training opportunities for teachers focused on subject areas.

- More than 75 percent of 1,300 teachers surveyed reported that the quality of professional development has improved.

- All superintendents have completed a **training program and assessment center** process set up by the state Department of Education. New superintendents have one year to complete the process. Finance and school law are two primary topics of this training.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Expect professional development offerings to continue to improve and to focus on instruction and its link to assessment. Teachers have no time to waste on poor in-service programs. They need to be selective in choosing professional development that meets their needs. School councils make many of these decisions.

- Watch for professional development to begin changing from "in-service days" to new and different activities such as study groups, classroom research, observing other teachers teach, networking with other teachers, and being observed and critiqued by other teachers.

- Expect more attention given to schools with poor student achievement.

- Professional development, resource information, and support is available through Kentucky's eight regional service centers:

Region 1:	Murray State University, Calloway County (502) 762-3217
Region 2:	Western Kentucky University, Warren County (502) 746-7063
Region 3:	Jefferson County Schools/Gheens Academy, Jefferson County (502) 485-3850
Region 4:	Northern Kentucky University, Kenton County (606) 292-6778
Region 5:	University of Kentucky, Fayette County (606) 257-4907
Region 6:	London, Laurel County (606) 862-0282
Region 7:	Morehead State University, Rowan County (606) 783-5372
Region 8:	Prestonsburg, Floyd County (606) 886-0205

- Specialists in these regional service centers provide consultation on content areas such as reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, and science. They can also provide assistance with technology, primary schools, accelerated learning (formerly called Title I) and exceptional children.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Ask** teachers and principals the following questions: Does professional development:

- ✓ Connect to improving student learning?
- ✓ Meet the needs of teachers and administrators?
- ✓ Address learning needs identified by data on student achievement?
- ✓ Provide time and follow-up support?
- ✓ Model effective teaching for all students?
- ✓ Use principles of adult learning?
- ✓ Increase teachers' knowledge of subject matter?
- ✓ Emphasize ongoing improvement in teaching?
- ✓ Improve skills, leadership, and teamwork?
- ✓ Involve teachers in decisions?

★ **Ask** if you can sit in on professional development sessions that interest you.

★ **Understand** that teachers need time without students to plan, study, discuss, and learn improved teaching methods.

★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members if they participate with other districts in professional development consortia.

★ **Ask** your school council if it has a professional development committee and how it plans to use its professional development funds. Volunteer to serve on the committee that makes those recommendations to the council.

★ **Write** to your elected officials with specific examples of successes or problems.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Professional Development** at (502) 564-2672 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us
- **The Regional Service Center** in your area. (See page 56 for a list and phone numbers.)

NOTES:

EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BOARD

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- The **Education Professional Standards Board** is responsible for:

  - ✓ establishing teacher training and certification standards for all educators who work in schools
  - ✓ setting standards for, approving, and evaluating teacher education programs at colleges and universities
  - ✓ issuing, renewing, and revoking teaching certificates
  - ✓ maintaining data and submitting reports on trends in teacher employment
  - ✓ reducing and streamlining the number of teaching certificates
  - ✓ developing guidelines and being trained to deal with reports of sexual misconduct by professionals
  - ✓ setting policies for alternative training programs. This allows experts and professionals who have college but not education degrees to become classroom teachers. This is intended to make it easier for highly-skilled and knowledgeable persons to enter teaching, especially in areas where there are shortages.

- The board members include nine classroom teachers, two school administrators (one of whom is a principal), the commissioner of education, the executive director of the Council on Postsecondary Education, one local school board member, two deans of education from state universities, and one chief academic officer from a private non-profit college or university.

- Kentucky teachers who have met requirements for Rank II and are certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards can qualify for Rank I. In the past, a teacher qualified for Rank I only with 30 hours of college credit in addition to a master's degree.

- The board is authorized to charge fees for issuing and renewing teaching certificates. This became effective January, 1997. Funds partially support the cost of issuing and revoking certificates.

- University or college teachers may receive alternative certification to teach at the high school level if they have a master's or doctoral degree in the subject for which they seek certification, and five years of full-time teaching experience. They must also successfully complete a teacher internship program. This became effective in July, 1996.

- The board has adopted regulations for teachers to maintain certification by successfully completing continuing education, which may include university courses, field-based experiences, individual research, and approved professional development activities. The board must also establish a system to ensure high-quality continuing education.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

➔ The Governor's Task Force on Teacher Quality has been meeting throughout this school year and will be making recommendations for improving teacher preparation and professional development.

RESULTS

- The Education Professional Standards Board approved **standards for new teachers, experienced teachers, new and experienced counselors, and administrators** (principals and superintendents). Work in Kentucky and with a consortium of other states continues in the development of assessments to be used to ensure that teachers and administrators have met these standards.

- The Education Professional Standards Board adopted the Interstate School Leaders License Consortium Administrator Standards in place of the Kentucky Administrator Standards.

- Persons with 10 years of exceptional work experience may be certified as high school teachers in the area of their expertise with standards board approval.

- Kentucky has **12 teachers certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards**. The board's goal is to have one National Board-certified teacher in every public school.

- Kentucky has a partnership with the **National Commission on Teaching and America's Future**, and has completed a policy audit on teacher preparation.

- Two school districts, in collaboration with three state universities, offer **approved alternative certification** programs.

- A certificate in **Interdisciplinary Early Childhood** has been adopted, and preparation programs have been approved at all state institutions and Spalding University.

- The **Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (KTIP)** has been revised Although there has always been an emphasis on the professional growth of the teacher, the new focus is on helping new teachers move through a process of professional growth designed to enhance their ability to reflect on and analyze their teaching and make the curricular and instructional adjustments necessary for ensuring maximum student learning.

- The board adopted regulations allowing **professional development** to replace up to 12 graduate hours in the fifth-year (Rank II) program. (Within a specified period of time, teachers must complete a fifth-year program to continue teaching in Kentucky. This can be a master's degree or completion of a certain number of hours of advanced work. Current regulations allow teachers to receive credit for professional development hours.) The Experienced Teacher Standards will be used as the basis for all fifth-year programs.

- Between 1990 and 1996, the board reduced the **number of certifications** and revised testing requirements to meet these new standards.

- Between 1990 and July 1998, the board received a total of 1,279 revocation and character fitness cases which could have resulted in denial or revocation of the teaching certificate. During the period from January 1995 through July 1998, the board issued a total of 144 final orders for revocation, suspension, or agreed settlements. This compares to 14 revocations from 1985 to 1990.

- In January 1998, colleges and universities began new **performance-based preparation programs** designed to prepare teachers with the knowledge and skills specified in the New Teacher Standards and to achieve Kentucky's goals for students and schools.

WHAT TO EXPECT

✏ Many people will be involved in discussions of recommendations by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future and how these could benefit Kentucky.

✏ The Governor's Task Force on Teacher Quality will make recommendations for legislature changes in the 2000 General Assembly.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ If your school or school district has an urgent need for teachers in special areas, **suggest** use of an alternative training program.

★ **Speak well** of teaching as a profession. **Encourage talented young people**, both male and female and of all ethnic backgrounds, to consider teaching as a career. Recognize good teaching in your school and school district.

★ **Ask** college professors what they are doing to change the way teachers are prepared in the future and how they are helping in schools.

★ **Report** to the local school district persons holding teaching certificates (teachers, administrators, principals, superintendents) whom you believe to be guilty of immorality, misconduct, or incompetency serious enough to have their teaching certificate revoked. If needed, contact the Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Teacher Education and Certification at (502) 573-4606 or the Office of Education Accountability at (800) 242-0520.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Teacher Education and Certification** at (502) 573-4606 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us

NOTES:

SCHOOL FINANCE

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK)** is the funding formula used to allocate state dollars to school districts.

- **Local districts must participate** in the SEEK program by raising no less than 30 cents per $100 assessed property evaluation or its equivalent. The state provides additional funds to meet the minimum guaranteed amount.

- Districts are guaranteed a certain allotment for each student. The **base guarantee per pupil** for 1999-2000 is $2,924. Additional funds are provided for exceptional students, economically-disadvantaged students, and transportation so the base SEEK per pupil allotment varies depending on the differing needs of the districts.

- **Tier 1** allows districts to raise an additional 15 percent of revenue above the base without referendum, which is equalized to 150 percent of the state's average per pupil assessment.

- **Tier 2** allows districts to raise an additional 30 percent of revenue above the base plus Tier 1, subject to referendum. This is not matched by the state and sets the cap or maximum difference in spending allowed by law.

- The local districts must levy no less than an additional 5 cents (or its equivalent) to participate in the state **School Facilities Construction** program.

- **Additional state funding** is provided to school districts for:

  - ✓ preschool programs
  - ✓ extended school services
  - ✓ programs for gifted and talented students
  - ✓ professional development
  - ✓ technology
  - ✓ family resource and youth services centers
  - ✓ vocational/technical programs and transportation
  - ✓ textbooks

- School districts are required to provide funds to each school council based on a **school council allocation formula**, adopted by the Kentucky Board of Education.

RESULTS

- The **gap in per pupil expenditures** between low wealth, property-poor school districts and high wealth districts has been reduced by over 45 percent between 1989-90 and 1997-98.

- The **total funds for education**, including all revenue from the local and state governments, increased 70.8 percent from 1989-90 to 1997-98. (Office of Education Accountability)

- According to National Education Association (NEA), Kentucky's **rank in per pupil expenditures** went from 41st in the nation in 1989-90 at $3,793 to 21st in 1996-97 at $6,229. The national per pupil expenditure is $6,327.

- Teacher salaries on average have increased from $24,930 in 1989-90 to $33,950 in 1996-97 (25th nationally). The average teacher salary in Kentucky is $4,500 below the national average. (Source: NEA)

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ If your school is managed by a school-based decision making council, **attend** council meetings and ask how much money was allocated to the council and how it will spend those funds.

★ **Attend** school board meetings and ask how much money your district received last year, how the money was spent, and what the plans are for current spending.

★ **Volunteer** to serve on or assist the district's Facility Planning Committee when one is appointed. Attend its meetings.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky Department of Education, Office of District Support Services, Division of Finance** at (502) 564-3846 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us

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NOTES:

GOVERNANCE

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Kentucky school law provides for **shared leadership** with certain decisions made at each level—state, district, and school. Since 1990, more decisions are being made at the school level. For example, school-based decision making allows teachers and parents the opportunity to make decisions about learning for their students.

- Members of the **Kentucky Board of Education** are appointed by the governor for staggered 4-year terms. They must have no less than an associate degree or its equivalent. Appointees must be approved by the Kentucky General Assembly.

- The **Kentucky Department of Education** is located in Frankfort but has eight Regional Service Centers to provide information and assistance to local schools and districts. (See page 56 for a list of centers.) A toll-free number [(800) 533-5372] is maintained by department staff to answer questions.

- Oversight of schools and school improvement is directed by the **Office of Education Accountability** in the Legislative Research Commission. A toll-free number [(800) 242-0520] is available to report concerns or ask questions.

- Kentucky school law includes the following provisions:

  ✓ In most cases, a **superintendent's relatives** cannot work in his or her school district. This rule does not apply to a relative who is an employee of the district for at least 36 months before a superintendent assumes office or to an employee who marries a relative of the superintendent as long as he or she is qualified for that job. A superintendent's spouse who has at least 20 years of service as a school employee may be employed in the district.

  ✓ **Principals cannot employ relatives** at their schools, but relatives employed before July 1990 are exempt under current law. Spouses are exempt if:

    - there is no other position in the district for which the spouse is certified;
    - the spouse was employed in the 1989-90 school year, and
    - the spouse is in a district where there is no more than one elementary, middle and/or high school.

  ✓ If a principal's spouse is employed in that principal's school, he or she must be evaluated by another administrator.

- ✓ **School board members** must have a high school diploma or GED.

- ✓ **Campaign contributions** to school board candidates are limited to $100 from individuals and $200 from organizations for each election.

- ✓ **School board members** cannot ask school employees for campaign contributions or services.

- ✓ When there is a **vacancy on the school board**, the state commissioner of education appoints members to serve until the next election.

- ✓ The local school board still hires the superintendent—with advice from a screening committee that includes two teachers, a principal, a local school board member, and a parent. A minority parent is added if there is no minority on the committee and the district has eight percent or more minority students enrolled. The school board makes the final **superintendent selection** and may pick someone not recommended by the committee.

- ✓ The school board can, by four-fifths vote and approval of the state education commissioner, break a **superintendent's contract** for cause.

- ✓ The **local school board** establishes district-wide goals for education; hires the superintendent; decides when and where to build new school facilities; provides services; manages all school funds and property for the district; sets rules and regulations for school property management. It transacts business for the district; sets tax rates, and establishes qualifications for all employees.

- ✓ **Local school boards and superintendents** create guidelines and general requirements for school operations. School-based decision making councils make curricular and instructional (what is taught and how) decisions for their school. The district and board provide support and assistance for councils to do their work.

- ✓ The Kentucky Board of Education is authorized to **waive** any of its **regulations** when a school district or school shows it can produce the same results without the regulation, or when hardship or just cause is a factor.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ If your school has a school-based decision making council, **run** for a school council seat, volunteer to be a council committee member, or offer to help the PTA/PTO/PTSA with elections. If there is no PTA in your school, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help (502) 564-4378.

- ★ **Support** superior performance from school board members, administrators, and teachers.

★ **Encourage** good candidates to run for school board offices or apply for appointment when vacancies occur between elections. Consider running for a school board seat.

★ To **learn more about service as a school board member**, **call** the Partnership for Kentucky Schools at (606) 455-9595 and ask for a copy of the report they prepared with the Kentucky School Boards Association and the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. It is called *Difficult Ground: Community Leaders and Schools Board Service in Kentucky*.

★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Be informed about local school board elections.

★ **Vote** in school board and school council elections.

★ If you have questions about whether the law is being followed in your district, **talk** with your principal, superintendent, or school board members. If that does not correct the problem or answer your questions, contact the Office of Education Accountability at (800) 242-0520.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org
- **The Kentucky School Boards Association**, (502) 695-4630
- **The Kentucky Association of School Councils**, (606) 238-2188
- **The Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Legal Services**, (502) 564-4474, or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us
- **The Office of Education Accountability**, (800) 242-0520

NOTES:

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL SCHEDULES AND CALENDARS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- There is nothing in the law that requires schools or districts to change their calendars or schedules. However, the 1994 General Assembly passed a resolution asking the Kentucky Department of Education to promote the idea of **year-round school calendars** and assist schools and districts in gathering information and establishing year-round schools if they are interested. Decisions about changing school calendars are left to local districts.

- The 1996 General Assembly gave schools **more flexibility** in setting school calendars (length of the school year and school day) as long as 1,050 hours of instruction are provided for students. This is equal to 175 6-hour days. This includes flexibility for half-day students as long as 525 hours of instruction are provided.

RESULTS

- Some school districts are now using a **year-round calendar** that includes the same number of instructional days for students with a different schedule. The following are two examples of how schools and districts have decided to operate. They are many other possibilities:

  ✓ One school begins school in early August, holds school for nine weeks and then is off for three weeks. This cycle is repeated until school lets out in late June for a 6-week break. The 3-week intercessions can be used for tutoring, special trips and activities, professional development and planning, or as a break.

  ✓ Another school begins early in August and ends in late June. It holds classes that focus on academic subjects on Tuesday through Friday. On Monday, students and teachers may come to school (most students do) for field trips, extracurricular activities, intramural sports, and tutoring. This school takes the same days off as the rest of the school district; it just starts earlier and ends later.

- A school district may **dismiss students early** one day a week and make up the time by adding more days to the 175 required instructional days. They could also make up the time by adding a few minutes to each school day. The early dismissal day provides time for teachers to study and plan together.

- Some high schools are adopting **block scheduling**. Students take fewer subjects with longer class periods during the semester. Each semester students change schedules, so they take the same number of courses or more in a more concentrated time frame.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Many school districts are forming **local task forces** to study ways to use school time more efficiently and effectively. They are reviewing research about how the school day, week, and year can be reorganized to enhance student learning and support teachers by providing more time for planning and professional development.

- Early **lessons learned** by schools and districts that should be considered when studying changes in scheduling include:

  - ✓ making sure there is adequate time to plan before changing to a different schedule;
  - ✓ involving all persons and groups who are affected by these changes such as teachers, parents, students, as well as community, business, and church leaders;
  - ✓ using a decision-making process that is fair and based on the needs of the local community;
  - ✓ realizing that such changes challenge local culture and traditions;
  - ✓ being sure teachers reorganize their lesson plans to cover the same material in different ways
  - ✓ making sure changes are made for the right reason—to improve academic achievement for students.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Ask** if your district or any schools in your district are considering a different schedule. Ask about the purpose of those considerations. Is it to improve student learning? Is it to decrease costs? Is it to use the available building space more efficiently and perhaps avoid building new schools?

- ★ If your high school has adopted block scheduling, **ask** how that has affected student learning.

- ★ **Volunteer** to serve on a committee that is studying these issues.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (606) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org
- **The Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (606) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Partnership's Web site at www.pfks.org and ask for a copy of their study and report on restructuring time.
- **The Kentucky Department of Education** 800-533-5372 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us

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PARENT INVOLVEMENT

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **Kentucky law says**: "The General Assembly recognizes that public education involves shared responsibilities. State government, local communities, parents, students, and school employees must work together to create an efficient public school system. Parents and students must assist schools with efforts to assure student attendance, preparation for school, and involvement in learning. The cooperation of all involved is necessary to assure that desired outcomes are achieved . . ."

- In addition the law recognizes the **importance of parent involvement** by requiring the following:

  - ✓ Parents are members of school-based decision making councils at each school, making important decisions about school issues around learning and instruction.
  - ✓ One of the critical attributes of the primary program is positive parent involvement.
  - ✓ The preschool program requires that schools involve parents.
  - ✓ Parents are required members of local family resource and youth services center advisory councils and must make up no less than one third of the membership.
  - ✓ The membership of superintendent screening committees includes parents.
  - ✓ The state board requires that parents be represented on local facilities planning groups that study the building and redistricting needs of school districts.
  - ✓ Federal law requires that parents be included on individual education planning meetings for students with special learning needs.

- The **definition of parent** for the purpose of school-based decision making includes parents, stepparents, or foster parents, or a person who has legal custody of a student and with whom the student resides.

- The 1998 General Assembly created a **State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education**; four of its 19 appointed members will be parents.

- The Kentucky Board of Education has a **policy statement** titled *Parent and Family Involvement Initiative* that recognizes the importance of the family's role in educating children. It encourages schools to welcome parents/families and engage them in their child's education.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

→ A 46-member **Parent Advisory Council** has been created by the Commissioner of Education. This state-level council will meet four times each year. Its purpose is to advise

the Commissioner of Education on policy issues and increase the positive leadership of parents for improving public education in Kentucky.

→ The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, Kentucky Congress of Parents and Teachers (PTA), and the Association of Older Kentuckians are sponsoring the **Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership**. The first institute of 100 parents was held in the fall of 1997. Each year for three years, 225 parents will be selected for this program. These institutes will prepare parents to work in their own communities to engage more parents in working to improve student achievement. Contact (800) 928-2111 or Lexington area (606) 233-9849 for more information.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Encourage** your school to become a Welcoming School. A Welcoming School encourages parents and the public to become more involved in education by implementing the following practices. Call (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849) for more information.

- ✓ Display a mission statement committing the work of the school to students, families, and the community it serves.
- ✓ Reflect an orderly and safe environment conducive to effective learning by students and productive work by staff.
- ✓ Display internal and external signs welcoming visitors to the school.
- ✓ Use friendly language to describe what visitors should do when entering the school.
- ✓ Have designated parking areas for visitors.
- ✓ Employ staff who are friendly to visitors, provide needed information easily, and who answer the phone in a way that makes callers glad they have called the school.
- ✓ Set standards of welcoming behavior for all staff and volunteers, including bus drivers, custodians, and cafeteria workers.
- ✓ Display students' academic work throughout the building.
- ✓ Display large readable signs with directions to such areas as library, gym, cafeteria, and rest rooms.
- ✓ Have an identified and furnished work space for parents and other volunteers.
- ✓ Have a cheerful and furnished waiting area for visitors.
- ✓ Have clearly written information available to parents and visitors explaining school philosophy and programs and how a person can be involved.

- ✓ Have an outside marquee that is readable from the street and carries notices of meetings, recognition of students/staff/organizations.
- ✓ Make it possible for staff to be easily accessible to parents.
- ✓ Produce an overall climate that is cheerful and student-centered.
- ✓ Ensure that students demonstrate friendly and courteous behavior.

★ **Apply** for the Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership. Call the Prichard Committee at (800) 928-2111 for more information.

★ **Get involved** with the consolidated planning process at your school.

★ **Organize a Parents and Teachers Talking Together** for your school. This is a meeting where teachers and parents can talk about what they want for the children in their school and how they can work to get it. Contact the Prichard Committee community support coordinator serving your county or call (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849). See page 68.

★ **Run** for a seat on your school council.

★ **Volunteer** to serve on a school council committee.

★ **Get involved** with your PTA/PTO/PTSA. If your school does not have a PTA, **form** one. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help (502) 564-4378.

★ **Ask** to see a copy of the Core Content for Assessment, the guide for teachers as they prepare curriculum and instruction. Call the Prichard Committee at (800) 928-2111 for a copy or the Kentucky Association of School Councils for Core Content Cards. Hold a discussion about the content with the PTA, school council curriculum committee, or other group of parents.

★ **Ask** to see a copy of your School Consolidated Plan to see what is planned to improve student learning. Volunteer to serve on the planning committee.

★ **Plan** a minority parent workshop. Contact the Division of Minority Educator Recruitment and Retention at (502) 573-4606 for more information.

★ **Contact** a Prichard Committee community support coordinator for information or assistance in your region. (See page 73)

★ **Contact** Forward in the Fifth (5th Congressional District) to get involved with their school support programs (606) 986-3696.

★ **Stay in contact with your state legislators.** Call and leave a message in Frankfort on the Legislative Message Line (800) 372-7181; write to them in Frankfort at Capitol Annex, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601; send an e-mail message. The Legislative Research Commission Web site at www.lrc.state.ky.us has a listing called "Finding and contacting legislators" providing names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses for those members who use e-mail.

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- **The Kentucky Department of Education** at 800-533-5372 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us
- **The Kentucky Congress of Parents and Teachers** at (502) 564-4378

NOTES:

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August 1999

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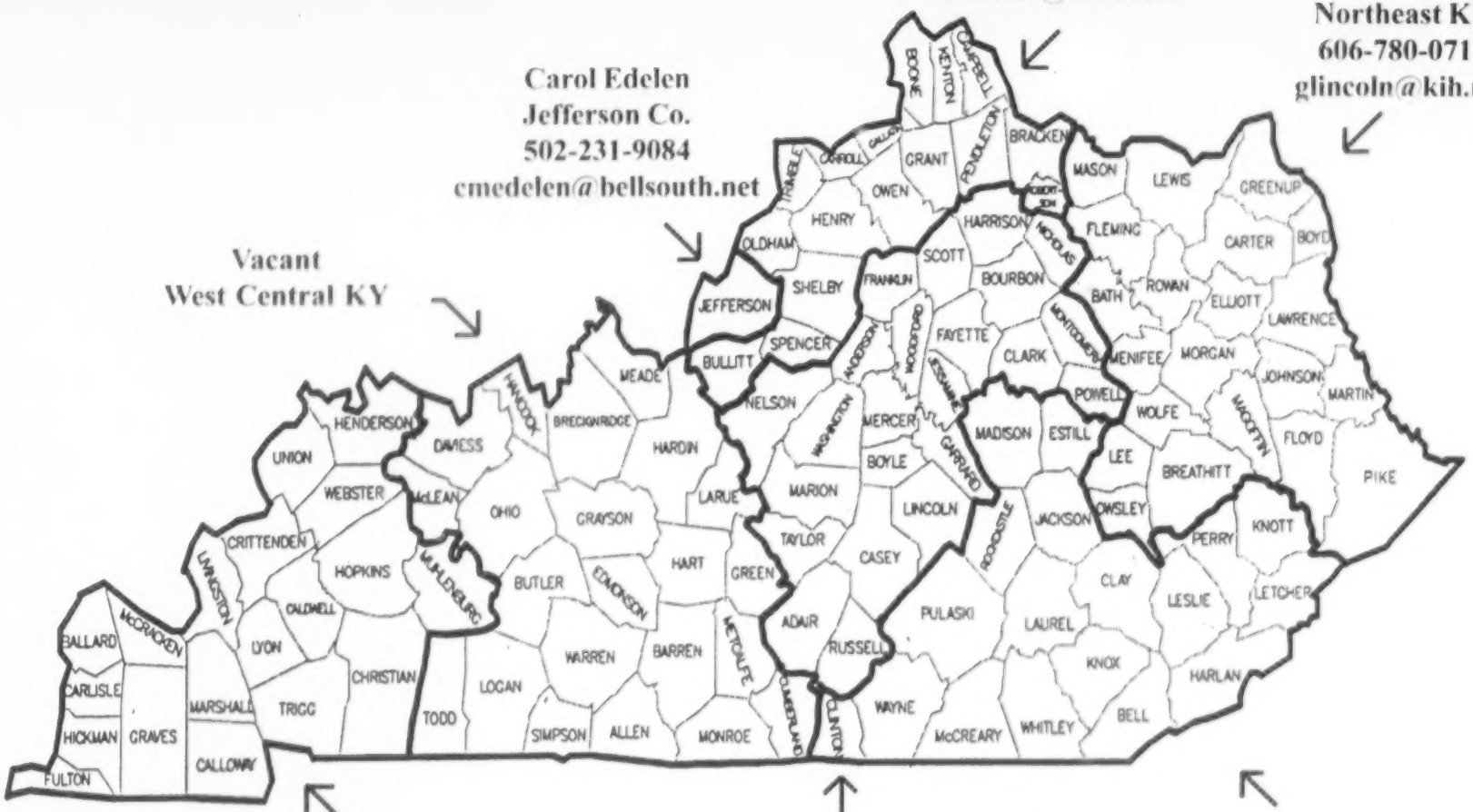

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